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LITERARY REMAINS

OF THE LATE

HENRY NEELE.

LONDON:

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By Archer

LECTURES

ON

ENGLISH POETRY;

FROM THE REIGN OF EDWARD THE THIRD, TO THE TIME OF BURNS
AND COWPER, DELIVERED AT THE RUSSELL INSTITUTION, IN 1827 :

WITH

MISCELLANEOUS TALES AND POEMS;

BEING THE

LITERARY REMAINS

OF THE LATE

HENRY NEELE,

AUTHOR OF THE "ROMANCE OF HISTORY," ETC. ETC.

Fruits of a genial morn, and glorious noon,
A deathless part of him who died too soon.

LORD BYRON'S MONODY ON SHERIDAN.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

SMITH, ELDER, AND CO. 65, CORNHILL.

1830.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE present Volume, like almost every other posthumous publication, has to solicit its Readers' indulgence towards those unavoidable inaccuracies, for which he who alone could have corrected them, is no longer responsible. The hand that traced the following pages now moulders in the grave; the wreath which should have garlanded the Poet's brow, is now twined around his sepulchre; and the chaplet of his living fame

“ Is hung upon his Hearse, to droop and wither there ! ”

TO the last work which will bear the name of HENRY NEELE upon its Title-page, it becomes

an act of duty to prefix some few particulars of his writings, and of their Author: and though this tribute to the departed comes late and un-availing; though, like the custom of placing flowers in the cold hands of the dead, Praise now but wastes it's sweetness upon ears which can no longer listen to it's melody; still, to give perpetuity to the memory of Genius is one of the most grateful offices of humanity; nor does man ever seem more deserving of immortality himself, than when he is thus endeavouring to confer it worthily upon others.

The late Henry Neele was the second Son of a highly respectable map and heraldic Engraver in the Strand, where he was born January 29th, 1798; and upon his Father removing to Kentish Town, was there sent to School, as a daily boarder, and continued at the same Seminary until his education was completed. At this Academy, though he became an excellent French scholar, yet he acquired "little Latin, and less Greek;" and, in fact, displayed no very devoted application to, or even talent for, study of any sort: with the exception of Poetry; for which he thus early

evinced his decided inclination, and produced several specimens of extraordinary beauty, for so juvenile a writer. Henry Neele's inattention at School was, however, amply redeemed by his unassisted exertions when he better knew the value of those attainments which he had neglected; and he subsequently added a general knowledge of German and Italian, to the other languages in which he became a proficient. Having made choice of the profession of the Law, he was, upon leaving School, articulated to a respectable Attorney; and, after the usual period of probationary experience, was admitted to practice, and commenced business as a Solicitor.

It was during the progress of his clerkship, in January, 1817, that Henry Neele made his first appearance as an Author, by publishing a Volume of Poems; the expenses of which were kindly defrayed by his Father: who had the judgment to perceive, and the good taste to appreciate and encourage, the dawning genius of his Son. Though this work displayed evident marks of youth and inexperience, yet it was still more decidedly characterised by a depth of thought and feeling, and

an elegance and fluency of versification, which gave the surest promises of future excellence. It's contents were principally Lyrical, and the ill-fated Collins was, avowedly, his chief model. The publication of this Volume introduced the young Poet to Dr. Nathan Drake, Author of "*Literary Hours*," &c., who, though acquainted with him "only through the medium of his writings," devoted a Chapter of his "*Winter Nights*," to a critical examination and eulogy of these Poems; "of which," says the Doctor, "the merit strikes me as being so considerable, as to justify the notice and the praise which I feel gratified in having an opportunity of bestowing upon them." And in a subsequent paragraph, he observes, that, "when beheld as the very firstlings of his earliest years, they cannot but be deemed very extraordinary efforts indeed, both of taste and genius; and as conferring no slight celebrity on the Author, as the name next to be pronounced, perhaps, after those of Chatterton and Kirke White."

The duties and responsibility of active life, however, necessarily withdrew much of his attention from writing: yet though his professional avoca-

tions were ever the objects of his first regard, he still found frequent leisure to devote to composition. In July, 1820, Mr. Neele printed a new Edition of his Odes, &c., with considerable additions; and in March, 1823, published a Second Volume of Dramatic and Miscellaneous Poetry, which was, by permission, dedicated to Miss Joanna Baillie, and at once established it's Author's claims to no mean rank amongst the most popular writers of the day. The minor Poems, more especially the Songs and Fragments, were truly beautiful specimens of the grace and sweetness of his genius; and amply merited the very general approval with which they were received.

Ardent and enthusiastic in all his undertakings, Mr. Neele's Literary industry was now amply evidenced by his frequent contributions to the "*Monthly Magazine*," and other Periodicals; as well as to the "*Forget Me Not*," and several of it's contemporary Annuals; the numerous Tales and Poems for which, not previously reprinted by himself, are all included in the present Volume. Having been long engaged in studying the Poets of the olden time, particularly the great masters of the Drama of the age of Queen Elizabeth, for

all of whom, but more especially for Shakspeare, he felt the most enthusiastic veneration, he was well qualified for the composition of a series of “ *Lectures on English Poetry,*” from the days of Chaucer down to those of Cowper, which he completed in the Winter of 1826 ; and delivered, first at the Russell, and subsequently at the Western Literary, Institution, in the Spring of 1827. These Lectures were most decidedly successful ; and both public and private opinion coincided in describing them as “ displaying a high tone of Poetical feeling in the Lecturer, and an intimate acquaintance with the beauties and blemishes of the great subjects of his criticism.” Although written with rapidity, and apparent carelessness, they were yet copious, discriminative, and eloquent ; abounding in well-selected illustration, and inculcating the purest taste. From the original Manuscripts these compositions are now first published ; and deeply is it to be deplored, that the duty of preparing them for the Press should have devolved upon any one but their Author : since in that case alone, could the plan which he had evidently proposed to himself have been fully completed ; and where, in many instances, his intentions can now but be conjectured only, from the traces

of his outline, his design would then have been filled up to it's entire extent, and harmonized in all it's proportions of light and shadow.

In the early part of 1827 Mr. Neele published a new Edition of all his Poems, collected into two Volumes; and in the course of the same year produced his last and greatest Work, the “*Romance of English History*,” which was dedicated, by permission, to His Majesty; and though extending to three Volumes, and, from it's very nature, requiring much antiquarian research, was completed in little more than six months. Flattering as was the very general eulogium which attended this publication, yet the voice of praise was mingled with the warnings of approaching evil; and, like the lightning which melts the sword within it's scabbard, it is but too certain that the incessant labour and anxiety of mind attending it's completion, were the chief sources of that fearful malady which so speedily destroyed him.

“ ’Twas his own genius gave the final blow,
And help'd to plant the wound that laid him low ;—
So the struck Eagle, stretch'd upon the plain,
No more through rolling clouds to soar again,

View'd his own feather on the fatal dart,
Which wing'd the shaft that quiver'd in his heart !
Keen were his pangs, but keener far to feel
He nursed the pinion which impell'd the steel ;
While the same plumage that had warm'd his nest,
Drank the last life-drop of his bleeding breast !”

Of the work itself, which comprises a series of Tales, founded on some Romantic occurrences in every reign, from the Conquest to the Reformation, it is difficult to speak accurately. The subject, excepting in it's general outlines, was one to which Mr. Neele was confessedly a stranger; and as he had to search for his materials through the obscure Chronicles of dry antiquity, and actually to “ read up” for the illustration of each succeeding narrative, his exertions must have been equally toilsome and oppressive; and the instances of haste and inaccuracy, which, it is to be regretted, are of such very frequent occurrence, are thus but too readily accounted for. On the other hand, the Tales are, in general, deeply interesting and effective; the leading historical personages all characteristically distinguished; and the dialogue, though seldom sufficiently antique for the perfect *vraisemblance* of History, is lively and animated. The illustrations of each reign are preceded by a

brief chronological summary of it's principal events; and amusement and information are thus most happily and inseparably united.

The “*Romance of History*” was very speedily reprinted in a Second Edition, and one Tale, “*Blanche of Bourbon*,” (inserted at page 254 of this Volume,) was written for it's continuation; as Mr. Neele would most probably have prepared another series; though it was the Publisher's original intention that each Country should be illustrated by a different Author.

With the mention of a new edition of Shakspeare's Plays, under the superintendence of Mr. Neele as Editor, for which his enthusiastic reverence for the Poet of “all time,” peculiarly fitted him, but which, from the want of patronage, terminated after the publication of a very few Numbers, closes the record of his Literary labours, and hastens the narration of that “last scene of all,” which laid him in an untimely grave. All the fearful details of that sad event it were too painful to dwell upon; and if the curtain of oblivion even for a moment be removed, it is to weep over them in silence, and close it again for ever. Henry

Neele fell by his own hand; the victim of an overwrought imagination :—

“ Like a tree,
That, with the weight of it's own golden fruitage,
Is bent down to the dust.”

On the morning of Thursday, February 7th, 1828, when he had scarcely passed his thirtieth birth-day, he was found dead in his bed, with but too positive evidences of self-destruction. The unhesitating verdict of the Coroner's Inquest was Insanity, as he had exhibited most unquestionable symptoms of derangement on the day preceding. And thus, in the very Spring of life, with Fame and Fortune opening their brightest views before him, he perished under the attacks of a disease, from which no genius is a defence, and no talent a protection; which has numbered amongst it's victims some of the loftiest Spirits of humanity, and blighted the proudest hopes that ever waked the aspirings of ambition.—

“ Breasts, to whom all the strength of feeling given,
Bear hearts electric, charged with fire from Heaven,
Black with the rude collision, inly torn,
By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds borne,

Driven o'er the lowering atmosphere that nurst
Thoughts which have turn'd to thunder, scorch and burst!"

In person, Mr. Neele was considerably below the middle stature; but his features were singularly expressive, and his brilliant eyes betokened ardent feeling and vivid imagination. Happily, as it has now proved, though his disposition was in the highest degree kind, sociable, and affectionate, he was not married. His short life passed, indeed, almost without events; it was one of those obscure and humble streams which have scarcely a name in the map of existence, and which the traveller passes by without enquiring either it's source or it's direction. His retiring manners kept him comparatively unnoticed and unknown, excepting by those with whom he was most intimate; and from their grateful recollection his memory will never be effaced. He was an excellent son; a tender brother; and a sincere friend. He was beloved most by those who knew him best; and at his death, left not one enemy in the world.

Of his varied talents this posthumous Volume will afford the best possible estimate; since it includes specimens of nearly every kind of composition

which Mr. Neele ever attempted. The Lectures will amply evidence the nervous eloquence of his Prose; and the grace and tenderness of his Poetry are instanced in almost every stanza of his Verse. Still, with a mind and manners so peculiarly amiable, and with a gaiety of heart, and playfulness of wit, which never failed to rouse the spirit of mirth in whatever society he found himself, it is, indeed, difficult to account for the morbid sensibility and bitter discontent, which characterize so many of his Poems; and which were so strongly expressed in a contribution to the "*Forget Me Not*" for 1826, (*vide* page 514 of these "*Remains*,") that the able Editor, his friend, Mr. Shoberl, considered it his duty to counteract it's influence by a "*Remonstrance*," which was inserted immediately after it. This is a problem, however, which it is now impossible to solve; and, with a brief notice of the present work, this Introduction will, therefore, at once be closed.

The following pages contain all the unpublished Manuscripts left with Mr. Neele's family; as well as most of those Miscellaneous Pieces which were scattered, very many of them anonymously, through various Periodicals, several of which are now

discontinued; though the Tales and Poems alluded to were never printed in any former collection of his writings. From the facility with which Mr. Neele wrote, the ready kindness with which he complied with almost every entreaty, and his carelessness in keeping copies, it is, however, highly probable, that numerous minor Poems may yet remain in obscurity. It would, indeed, have been easy to have extended the present Volume, even very far beyond its designed limits, but the failure of more than one similar attempt was a caution to warn from the quicksand on which they were wrecked: and to contract, rather than to extend, the boundaries previously prescribed. The Satire of the Reverend Author of "*Walks in a Forest*" has, unluckily for its objects, been but too frequently deserved:—

“ When Genius dies,
I speak what Albion knows, surviving friends,
Eager his bright perfections to display
To the last atom, echo through the land
All that he ever did, or ever said,
Or ever thought:—
Then for his writings, search each desk and drawer,
Sweep his Portfolio, publish every scrap,
And demi-scrap he penn'd; beg, borrow, steal,
Each line he scribbled, letter, note, or card,

To order shoes, to countermand a hat,
To make enquiries of a neighbour's cold,
Or ask his company to supper. Thus,
Fools! with such vile and crumbling trash they build
The pedestal, on which at length they rear
Their huge Colossus, that, beneath his weight,
'Tis crush'd and ground ; and leaves him dropt aslant,
Scarce raised above the height of common men !”

Here, then, this Introduction terminates. To those who loved him living, and who mourn him dead, these Remains of Henry Neele are dedicated ; in the assured conviction that his Genius will long “ leave a mark behind,” and not without a hope that even this slight Memorial will serve

“ To pluck the shining page from vulgar Time,
And leave it whole to late Posterity.”

J. T.

November 20th, 1828.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO

THE SECOND EDITION.

THE only notice requisite to introduce this Second Edition, is the expression of the EDITOR'S most unqualified gratification at the highly flattering reception of the First; and his very sincere acknowledgments for the truly unanimous approval, with which it was honoured by every criticism. To the friends of it's lamented Author, such posthumous praise cannot but be doubly welcome; and in this last memorial of a career so brilliant, though so brief, they must thus enjoy both a record and a consolation, never to pass away :—

“ Long, long be each heart with such memories fill'd !
Like a Vase in which roses have once been distill'd ;—
You may break, you may ruin the Vase, if you will,
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.”

J. T.

December 7th, 1829.

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To develop the dawning of Genius, and to pursue the progress of our own National Poetry, from a rude origin and obscure beginnings, to its perfection in a polished age, must prove an interesting and instructive investigation.

T. WARTON.

Authentic History informs us of no time when Poetry was not; and if the Divine Art has sometimes sung its own nativity, it is in strains which confess, while they glorify ignorance. The Sacred Annals are silent, and the Heathens, by referring the invention of Verse to the Gods, do but tell us that the mortal inventor was unknown.

“BLACKWOOD’S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE,” NOVEMBER, 1828.

LECTURES
ON
ENGLISH POETRY.

DELIVERED AT THE RUSSELL INSTITUTION, IN
THE MONTHS OF MARCH, APRIL,
AND MAY, 1827.

HAIL Bards triumphant! born in happier days!
Immortal heirs of universal praise!
Whose honours with increase of ages grow,
As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow;
Nations unborn your mighty names shall sound,
And Worlds applaud that must not yet be found.

POPE.

LECTURES

ON

ENGLISH POETRY.

LECTURE THE FIRST.

INTRODUCTORY ANALYSIS.

General Historical Summary :—The Age of Edward the Third :
—Chaucer :—The Ages of Henry the Eighth and Elizabeth :—Coincidences in the Literary Histories of England and Spain :—The Age of Charles the First :—Milton :—The New School of Comedy :—The Age of Queen Anne :—Compared with the Age of Elizabeth :—The Didactic Writers :—Improvement in the Public Taste :—Modern Authors to the time of Cowper.

It may appear somewhat presumptuous to hope to interest your attention, by a series of Lectures upon English Poetry, after the power and ability

with which the Mechanical and useful Arts have so recently been discussed and explained, on the same spot, and the wonders and mysteries of those Sciences laid open, which contribute so much to the happiness, the comforts, and even the necessities, of ordinary life. In introducing Poetry to your notice, I am constrained to confess that it is a mere superfluity and ornament. As *Falstaff* said of Honour, “ it cannot set to a leg, or an arm, or heal the grief of a wound ; it has no skill in Surgery.” Still, within the mind of man there exists a craving after intellectual beauty and sublimity. There is a mental appetite, which it is as necessary to satisfy as the corporeal one. There are maladies of the mind, which are even more destructive than those of the body ; and which, as the sound of the sweet Harp of David drove the demon out of Saul, have been known to yield to the soothing influence of Poetry. The earliest accomplishment of the rudest and wildest stages of society, it is also the crowning grace of the most polished and civilized. Nations the most illustrious in Arts and arms, have also been the most celebrated for their cultivation of letters ; and when the monuments of those Arts, and the achievements of those arms, have passed away from the face of the earth, they have transmitted their fame to the

remotest ages through the medium of Literature alone. The genius of Timanthes lives but in the pages of Pliny ; and the sword of Cæsar has been rendered immortal only by his pen.

The canvas fritters into shreds, and the column moulders into ruin ; the voice of Music is mute ; and the beautiful expression of Sculpture a blank and gloomy void : the right hand of the Mechanist forgets it's cunning, and the arm of the Warrior becomes powerless in the grave ; but the Lyre of the Poet still vibrates ; ages listen to his song and honour it : and while the pencil of Apelles, and the chisel of Phidias, and the sword of Cæsar, and the engines of Archimedes, live only in the breath of tradition, or on the page of history, or in some perishable and imperfect fragment ; the pen of Homer, or of Virgil, or of Shakspeare, is an instrument of power, as mighty and magical as when first the gifted finger of the Poet grasped it, and with it traced those characters which shall remain unobliterated, until the period when this great globe itself,—

“ And all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like an insubstantial Pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind !”

The history of the Poetry of England exhibits

changes and revolutions not less numerous and remarkable than that of it's politics ; and to a brief general summary of these, I propose to confine myself in this Introductory Lecture. I shall afterwards take a more detailed review of the merits of the individual Authors, who distinguished themselves at various periods ; and in drawing your attention to particular passages in their works, I shall select from such writers as are least extensively known.

English Poetry may be said to have been born in the reign of Edward the Third. The Monkish rhymes, the Troubadour Poems, the Metrical Romances of Thomas the Rhymer, Piers Plowman, and others, and the clumsy Translations from the Latin and the French, which were produced prior to that period, have but slender claims upon our attention ; except as affording, by their dulness and their gloom, a contrast to the extraordinary blaze of light which succeeded them, when Chaucer appeared in the Poetical hemisphere. At that period, the eyes of all Europe were turned towards England, who, perhaps, never in any age more highly distinguished herself. She then produced a Monarch who was the greatest Statesman and Warrior of his age, and to whom we are indebted for the foundation of many of the most im-

portant of the free Institutions, under which we now flourish; she produced a Divine, who had the boldness to defy the spiritual and temporal authority of Rome, and who struck the first blow at that colossal power,—a blow, from the effects of which we may say that she has never yet recovered; and now she produced a Poet, of whom it is scarcely too much to assert, that he was the greatest who had then appeared in modern Europe.

Chaucer's genius was vast, versatile, and original. He seems to have been deeply versed in classical, in French, and in Italian Literature, as well as in the Sciences, so far as they were known in his day, and in the polemical and theological questions which were then the favourite and fashionable studies. His knowledge of human nature was profound. The Knights, the Monks, the Reves, the Prioresses, which he has painted, have long since disappeared; but wherever we look around, we recognise the same passions, and feelings, and characters; the features remain, although the costume is altered; manners vary, but man remains the same: Human nature, however changeable in fashion, opinion, and outward appearance, is immutable in it's essence. Such as is the Monarch on his throne, such is the peasant

in his cottage; such as was the ancient Egyptian wandering among the Pyramids, such is the modern Englishman making the tour of Europe, and the Poet, who “dips”—as Garrick said of Shakspeare,—“his pencil in the human heart,” will produce forms and colours, the truth and beauty of which will be recognised, wherever such a heart beats. Chaucer’s versatility was most extraordinary. No English Poet, Shakspeare alone excepted, exhibits such striking instances of Comic and Tragic powers, united in the same mind. His humour and wit are of the brightest and keenest character; but then his pathos is tremendous, and his descriptive powers are of the highest order.

His diction and versification must be looked at with reference to the age in which he lived, and not to the splendid models which we now possess. He has been much censured by modern critics for a too liberal use of French and Norman words in his Poems; but Mr. Tyrwhitt, in his learned dissertation on the subject, has shewn most satisfactorily, that, as compared with his contemporaries, his diction is remarkably pure and vernacular; and Spenser has emphatically called him “a well of English undefiled.” His verses have also been said to be imperfect, and sometimes to consist of nine syllables, instead of ten. This is, I think, an equally

unfounded accusation; and, if the Reader will only take the precaution to make vocal the *e* final, whenever he meets with it, he will find few lines in Chaucer which are not harmonious and satisfactory to the ear.

I have, perhaps, spoken more at large of the merits of Chaucer than is consistent with my plan in this Introductory Lecture, but his writings form so important an era in the history of English Poetry, that I feel myself justified in making an exception in his favour. Chaucer died, and left nothing that resembled him behind him. Those Authors who formed what is called the School of Chaucer, are in no particular entitled to the name, excepting that they professed and entertained the profoundest veneration for their illustrious Master. Gower, although senior both in years and in authorship to Chaucer, and although he claims the latter as his scholar,—

“ Grete well Chaucer, when ye mete
As my disciple and Poete,”

did not begin to write English Poetry until after him, and is therefore placed in his School. He is a tame and mediocre writer, but every page displays his erudition, and shews that he possessed all the learning and accomplishments of his age. Neither

can much be said in favour of Occleve, or of Lydgate. The former, perhaps possessed more imagination, and the latter was the better versifier; but both are remembered only in the absence of superior talent.

From the death of Chaucer to the middle of the reign of Henry the Eighth, the history of English Literature is one dull and gloomy blank. The civil disturbances by which the kingdom was then convulsed, are probably the principal cause of this. While men were trembling for their lives, they were not likely to occupy themselves greatly either in the production, or the perusal, of Literature. The Sceptre first passed from the strenuous grasp of Edward the Third into the feeble hands of his grandson. Then came the usurpation of Bolingbroke; the rebellion of Northumberland; and afterwards the long and bloody wars of the Roses. Henry the Eighth mounted the throne with an undisputed title. He himself possessed some Literary talent, and made a shew—probably in emulation of his illustrious contemporary Francis of France,—of patronising letters and the Arts. Hence his reign was adorned by the productions of some men of real taste and genius, particularly by those of Lord Surrey, and Sir Thomas Wyatt. Neither of them were men of very commanding

powers, but they were both elegant and accomplished writers, and did much, at least to refine our English versification. Surrey is also distinguished as the first writer of narrative blank verse in our language, although he principally wrote in rhyme. Lord Vaux was also a very elegant lyrical writer, and some verses from one of his Songs are quoted by Shakspeare in the grave-digging scene in "*Hamlet*." Lord Buckhurst was—in conjunction with Thomas Norton,—the Author of the first English Tragedy, "*Gorboduc*;" a heavy, cumbrous performance, of but little value, except as a curious piece of antiquity. The noble Poet's fame is much better supported by his "*Induction to the Mirror of Magistrates*," a production of great power and originality. The tyrannical temper of the Sovereign, however, soon became manifest; and, together with the contests between the Papists and the Reformers, diverted the attention of the nation from Literature. The noblest and the best were seen daily led to the scaffold; and, among them, Surrey, the accomplished Poet whom I have just mentioned. The barbarous feuds stirred up by political and polemical animosity, which now again deluged the nation with blood, did not subside until Elizabeth ascended the throne. The Reign of Queen Eliza-

beth is the most illustrious period in the Literary history of modern Europe. Much has been said of the ages of Leo the Tenth, of Louis the Fourteenth, and of Queen Anne, but we are prepared to shew that the Literary trophies of the first mentioned period, are more splendid and important, than those of all the other three united. We are not alluding merely to what passed in our own country. The superiority of the literary efforts of that age to all the productions of English genius before or since, is too trite a truism to need our advocacy. But it is not so generally known, or, at least, remembered, that during the same period the other nations of Europe produced their master Spirits; and that Tasso, Camoens, and Cervantes, were contemporary with Shakspeare. Weigh these four names against those of all who have ever written, since the revival of Learning, to the present time, and the latter will be found to be but as dust in the balance. The accomplished scholars and elegant writers who adorned the Courts of Leo, of Louis, and of Anne, enjoy and deserve their fame; but they must not be put in competition with the mighty geniuses, who each, as it were, *made* the Literature of their respective countries; whose works are columns “high o’er the wrecks of Time that stand sublime;” and whose

reputations are independent of all the adventitious advantages of Schools and Courts, and are the self-reared monuments of great and original minds, which no time shall ever be able to disturb.

But though we have named only the four master Spirits of that period, yet that there is a troop behind, more numerous than those which were shewn in *Banquo's* glass. Spenser, Ben Jonson, Fletcher, Massinger, Lope de Vega, Calderon, Marino, these are bright names, which cannot be lost, even in the overwhelming splendour of those which we have already mentioned. In Spain and England, Literature, and especially Dramatic Literature, flourished simultaneously; and a similarity of taste and genius appears to have pervaded both Nations. The same bold and irregular flights of Fancy, the same neglect of all classical rules of composition, more than atoned for by the same original and natural beauties of thought and diction; and the same less venial violations of time, place, and costume, characterise both the Castilian and the English Muses. There appears then to have existed an intercourse of Literature and intellect between the two Nations, the interruption of which is much to be deplored. The Spanish language was then much studied in England; Spanish plots and scenery were chosen by many of our

Dramatists, and their dialogues, especially those of Jonson and Fletcher, were thickly interspersed with Spanish phrases and idioms. The marriage of Philip and Mary might probably conduce greatly to this effect; though the progress of the Reformation in England, and the strong political and commercial hostility, which afterwards existed between the two nations, appear to have put an end to this friendly feeling. English Literature then began to be too closely assimilated to that of France, and sustained, in my opinion, irreparable injury by the connection. Spain appears to be our more natural ally in Literature; and, it is a curious fact, that after the Poetry of both nations had for a long period been sunk in tameness and mediocrity, it should at the same time suddenly spring into pristine vigour and beauty, both in the Island and in the Peninsula; for Melandez, Quintana, and Gonsalez, are the worthy contemporaries of Byron, Wordsworth, Scott, and Moore.

Two great Authors of each nation, have also exhibited some curious coincidences, both in the structure of their minds, and in the accidents of their lives. Ben Jonson fought in the English Army against the Spaniards in the Netherlands, and Lope de Vega accompanied the Spanish Armada for the invasion of England. Shakspeare

and Cervantes, the profoundest masters of the human heart which the modern world has produced, were neither of them mere Scholars, shut up in the seclusion of a study ; both were busily engaged in active life, although one merely trod the mimic stage, and the other acted a part on the World's great Theatre ; both were afflicted with a bodily infirmity ; Shakspeare was lame, and Cervantes had lost a hand ; and, a still stranger coincidence remains, for both died upon the same day. If it be indeed true then, that,—

“ they do not err
Who say that when the Poet dies
Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,
And celebrates his obsequies,”—

how shall we be able to estimate the grief which pervaded Spain and England, on the 12th of April, 1616 ?

Elizabeth was unquestionably the first and most important person of the age in which she lived ; and, although she was, as Voltaire has somewhere called her, “ Mistress of only half an Island,” still she managed to humble the gigantic power of Spain ; to afford important succour to Henry the Fourth of France ; and to lay the foundation of that maritime superiority, which has given England,

insignificant as it is in extent and population, so important an influence over the destinies of the Globe. But besides this, she was a munificent and discriminating Patron of letters and literary men; was herself an accomplished linguist; and, according to Puttenham, “a Poetess of tolerable pretensions.” Her Court was thronged with men of letters and of genius. Her Chancellor was the immortal Bacon, the father of modern Philosophy; among her most distinguished Captains, were Raleigh and Sidney; among her Peers, were Lord Brooke, Vere, Earl of Oxford, and Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, all distinguished Poets; among her Prelates and dignified Divines, were Hall, the first and best of English Satirists, and Donne, the founder of what has been called the Metaphysical School of Poetry; and whatever honours she distributed, lawn sleeves, or robes of ermine, Coronets, or badges of Knighthood, they were rarely, if ever, given without reference to the learning and genius of the receiver.

James the First was destitute of the taste and talent of his great predecessor, but still he was desirous of being reputed a Patron of letters; and, by virtue of some stiff, pedantic, and absurd productions of his pen, styled himself an Author. Literature rather advanced than retrograded

under his rule ; and indeed, something like that mighty engine which is now of such enormous power, Public opinion, began to form in the nation ; taking Literature under it's protection, and thus rendering it less dependant, than heretofore, upon the Monarch and the Court. Of the Sovereign, however, who sent Raleigh to the block, no Literary man, or lover of letters, can speak with respect. The Authors who flourished in his reign were for the most part those who adorned that of Elizabeth.

The accession of Charles the First seemed an auspicious event for the cause of Literature, and the Arts. The Sovereign was himself a Prince of much learning, and of a refined and elevated taste. To him this nation is indebted for the acquisition of the Cartoons of Raphael ; he invited Vandyke, Rubens, Bernini, and other foreign Artists into this country ; was the liberal patron of Ben Jonson, Inigo Jones, and other native Poets and Artists ; and, amongst the crimes with which he was charged by his enemies, was one which, at the present day, we cannot judge to be quite unpardonable, namely,—that the volumes of Shakspeare were his companions day and night. The Poets who flourished in his reign, in addition to those who survived the reigns of his predecessors,

although they possessed not the commanding genius, and the wonderful creative powers of the Bards of the Elizabethan age,—“for there were Giants on the earth in those days,”—were yet among the most polished and elegant writers which the nation has produced. The sweetness of their versification was not of that tame and cloying nature, which the imitators of Pope afterwards introduced into our Literature; smooth to the exclusion of every bold and original thought.

The writings of Carew, Crashaw, Waller, Herrick, and Suckling, sparkling with the most brilliant and original ideas, expressed in the most elegant versification, shine out like precious gems richly cased. The favourite amusement of this period was the Dramatic entertainments called Masques. These were got up at Court with an extraordinary magnificence, which, we are told, modern splendour never reached even in thought; and that the taste in which they were produced was equal to the splendour, we may rest assured, when we know that Ben Jonson commonly wrote the Poetry, Lawes composed the Music, and Inigo Jones designed the decorations. Had Charles long continued to sway the English sceptre, there is no doubt that Literature and the Arts, but especially the latter, would have been materially ad-

vanced. To them the establishment of a Commonwealth, whatever it may have effected for the civil and religious liberties of the country, gave a blow from which they have scarcely yet recovered. The Theatres were kept closed ; Stage Plays were considered impious and profane ; the Altar-pieces were torn down, and the statues broken in our Cathedrals, as idolatrous and encouraging the image-worship of the Papists. Music, which was wont to give so solemn and impressive an effect to the service of the Church, was abolished as one of the most odious among the abominations of Popery ; and Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakspeare, were exiled from the libraries of the orthodox to make way for Withers, Quarles, and Herbert ! Nay, if we are literally to believe the assertion of an old Author, every thing which bore the slightest resemblance to the popish symbol of the Crucifix was held in such detestation, that even tailors were forbidden to sit cross-legged ! The King's Paintings, we are told by Whitelocke, were sold at very low prices, and enriched all the collections in Europe ; and, but for the tact and management of Selden, the library and medals of Saint James's would have been put up to auction, in order to pay the arrears of some regiments of Cavalry, quar-

tered near London. Poets, and other literary men were not only disturbed in their studies by the clang of arms, but many of them exchanged the pen for the sword, and mingled actively in the contest which raged around them.

Still, the most stirring and turbulent times are not the most unfavourable to the productions of Poetry. The Muse catches inspiration from the storm, and Genius rides upon the whirlwind, while perhaps it would only slumber during the calm. Chaucer wrote amidst all the irritation and fury excited by the progress of the Reformation; Spenser and Shakspeare, while the nation was contending for its very existence against the colossal power of Spain; and it was during the political and religious frenzy of the times of which we are now speaking, that Milton stored his mind with those sublime imaginings, which afterwards expanded into that vast masterpiece of human genius, the "*Paradise Lost*." There can be but little doubt that when this illustrious Poet, a man so accomplished in mind and manners, joined the Parliamentary party, he made many sacrifices of taste and feeling, for what he considered—whether correctly or not, it is not now my province to enquire,—the cause of civil and religious liberty.

Neither, vulgar and tasteless as was the mass of that party, was he without associates of whom even *he* had reason to be proud :—

“ Great men have been among us, hands that penn’d,
And tongues that utter’d wisdom : better none ;
The later Sydney, Marvell, Harrington,
Young Vane, and others, who call’d Milton friend.”

In early life he published his charming “ *Comus*,” “ *L’Allegro*,” “ *Il Penseroso*,” “ *Lycidas*,” and others of his minor Poems. During the war, his active engagements, as Latin Secretary to the Protector, and, generally, as a political partisan, occupied him almost exclusively; although, he has himself told us, that, even then his mind was brooding over the production of something “ which the world should not willingly let die.” It was not, however, until “ fallen on evil days, and evil tongues,” when the once celebrated Latin Secretary, and the future Poet of “ all time,” was only known as the blind old Schoolmaster of Artillery-walk, that he produced his immortal Epic.

The present Introductory Lecture being, as I have already stated, rather historical than critical, I shall not here enter into any examination of the merits of “ *Paradise Lost*.” I would, however, say a few words as to it’s effects upon the Literature

of the time. It is a very common error to suppose that it fell almost still-born from the press ; or, at least, that it was generally received with extraordinary coolness and neglect. That it was not at first acknowledged to be entitled to occupy that proud station on the British Parnassus, which is now universally conceded to it, is unquestionable ; but it is equally certain, that when first published, it was hailed with admiration and delight, by men of the highest talent ; and that even throughout the nation at large, the circumstances of the Author, and the spirit of the times considered, it was far more successful than could have been reasonably expected. The Author was a democrat and a dissenter, and the age was ultra-loyal and ultra-orthodox : the Poem was thoroughly imbued with a religious feeling and sentiment, and the public to which it was addressed, was more profligate and irreligious than it had been known to have ever been before. “ *Paradise Lost* ” was moreover written in blank verse ; a new, and strange, and, to many ears, an unpleasing style of metre, and, the purity and severity of taste which reigned throughout it, was opposed to the popular admiration of the far-fetched conceits and the tawdry ornaments of Cowley, and the Metaphysical School. Notwithstanding all these disadvantages, the Poem

received extraordinary homage, both from the learned and the public. Andrew Marvell and Dr. Barrow addressed eulogistic verses to the Author; and Dryden, the Laureate, and the favourite Poet of the day, when Milton's Epic was first introduced to his notice by the Earl of Dorset, exclaimed, "This man cuts us all out, and the ancients too." He also complimented Milton with the well known Epigram, beginning "Three Poets, in three distant ages born;" and afterwards, with his consent, constructed a Drama called "*The State of Innocence; or, the Fall of Man*," founded upon "*Paradise Lost*." "Fit audience let me find, though few," says Milton, and his wish was more than gratified; for above 1300. copies—a very great number in those days,—of his Poem were sold in less than two years; and 3000 more in less than nine years afterwards. It was not, however, until the celebrated critique of Addison appeared in the "*Spectator*," that the English nation at large became aware that it possessed a native Poet "above all Greek, above all Roman fame," and that it fully rendered him the honours which were so unquestionably his due.

The publication of "*Paradise Lost*" was soon followed by that of "*Paradise Regained*," and "*Sampson Agonistes*." Neither of the latter works

can be said to have advanced the fame of the Author of the former ; but for any other author they would have assuredly won the wreath of immortality. They do not appear to have had any decided influence upon the taste and spirit of the time. The favourite Poets were Butler, Otway, and Dryden : and, if we can once forget the sin of overlooking Milton, we must admit that the judgment of the age cannot be very severely arraigned for it's choice of favourites. The matchless Wit of the first, notwithstanding his occasional grossnesses, and his too general obscurity ; the profound pathos, and sweet versification of the Second, notwithstanding his wretched ribald attempts at wit and humour, his imperfect delineation of character, and the wicked sin of bombast, of which he is always guilty when he wishes to be sublime ; and the polish, elegance, and majestic flow of versification, the keen and indignant Satire, and the light and airy fancy of the last, notwithstanding his want of every thing that can be strictly called originality or invention ; I say that these brilliant endowments of the illustrious Triumvirate which I have named, are sufficient to eclipse all their imperfections, and to justify to the utmost, the eulogiums of their warmest admirers. About this period, too, began that brilliant, but profligate School of Comedy, which, in

time, could number in it's ranks Wycherley, Etherege, Farquhar, Vanbrugh, Congreve, Centlivre, and, last and least, Cibber. This School has been, strangely enough, termed a French School of Comedy: though all it's characteristics, both of merit and defect, appear to me to be perfectly national. The great stain of profligacy, which is unhappily impressed upon all it's productions, is certainly not to be traced to the example of our neighbours: for no one, even with the most thorough conviction of the superiority of our own Literature to their's, can pretend to point out in the scenes of French Comedy, any thing like the unblushing and shameless indelicacy which disgraces the masterpieces of English wit and humour. I fear that it is to that highly gifted duumvirate, Beaumont and Fletcher, that we must assign the "bad eminence" of having originally given to English Comedy this unfortunate characteristic. In the writings of Shakspeare, Jonson, and others of their contemporaries, we meet with occasional instances of this fault, but in none of them is it mixed up so essentially with the entire stamina and spirit of the Drama, as it is in Beaumont and Fletcher. The domination of the Puritans afterwards checked this vitiated taste: but at the Restoration it broke out again in more than pris-

tine vigour, and continued so long to infect Dramatic Literature, that, with the exception of the "*Provoked Husband*" of Vanbrugh and Cibber, it would be difficult to point out a single Comedy between the times of Dryden and Steele, which could possibly now be read aloud in reputable society. Decency afterwards reigned upon the Stage; but, unfortunately, she brought dulness and imbecility along with her.

The reign of Queen Anne, to which our enquiries have now brought us, is a very celebrated period in the annals of English Literature, and has been generally styled it's Augustan age. I am not disposed to quarrel with names. As far as Prose Literature is concerned, I am willing to admit that English Authors, during the reign of Anne, surpassed all their predecessors. The language certainly then possessed a higher polish, and was fixed upon a more durable basis, than it had ever attained before; a taste for Literature was very generally diffused, and Authors were most munificently patronized. Indeed this may rather be styled the *Golden* age for Authors; for eminence in polite Literature was then a passport to wealth, and honour, and sometimes to the highest offices of the State. Rowe was under Secretary for public affairs; Congreve enjoyed a lucrative post in the

Customs; Swift exercised great authority and influence in the Tory cabinet; Prior was Ambassador to the Court of France; and Addison was a Secretary of State; but if, by styling this the Augustan age, it is meant to affirm that it's Poetical productions are of a higher order of merit than those of any former period of our literary history, then I must pause before I admit the propriety of so designating it. Grace, fluency, elegance, and I will venture to add, mediocrity, are the characteristics of the Poetry of this age, rather than strength, profundity, and originality. True it is, that there are splendid exceptions to this rule, and that Swift, Pope, and Gay brightened the annals of the period of which I am speaking; but what are it's pretensions, when compared with the age of Queen Elizabeth? What are even the great names which I have just mentioned, when weighed against those of Jonson, Fletcher, Massinger, Spenser, and Shakspeare? and as to the minor writers of the two periods, who would dream of mentioning Donne, Drummond, Brown, Carew, and Herrick, in the same breath with Duke, King, Sprat, Tickell, Yalden, and Hughes? I must even deny the boasted refinement of versification in the latter age; unless to refine be to smooth, and level, and reduce all to one tame and insipid

equality. Leaving originality out of the question, I will ask, what Lyrical pieces of the age of Queen Anne, can, in mere elegance of diction, and flow of versification, be compared to the Lyrical parts of Jonson's and Beaumont's Dramas, and the sweet Songs of Carew and Herrick? The following is a once much admired Song, by Lord Landsdowne, who was Comptroller of the Household to Queen Anne:—

“ Thoughtful nights, and restless waking,
Oh! the pains that we endure!
Broken faith, unkind forsaking,
Ever doubting, never sure.

Hopes deceiving, vain endeavours,
What a race has Love to run!
False protesting, fleeting favours,
Every, every way undone.

Still complaining, and defending,
Both to love, yet not agree;
Fears tormenting, passion rending,
Oh! the pangs of jealousy.

From such painful ways of living,
Ah! how sweet could Love be free!
Still preserving, still receiving,
Fierce, immortal ecstasy!”

To these Verses, which, I admit, are exceed-

ingly smooth and flowing, I will oppose some by the supposed rugged old bard, Ben Jonson ; and I will then ask, for I do not wish to bear unreasonably hard upon the noble Poet of the Augustan age,—I say, I will then ask, not which has the most sense, the most meaning, the most Poetry, but which of the two Songs possesses the noblest music in the versification ?

“ Oh ! do not wanton with those eyes,
Lest I be sick with seeing ;
Nor cast them down, but let them rise,
Lest shame destroy their being.

Oh ! be not angry with those fires,
For then their threats will kill me,
Nor look too kind on my desires,
For then my hopes will spill me.

Oh ! do not steep them in thy tears,
For so will sorrow slay me,
Nor spread them as distract with fears,
Mine own enough betray me !”

When it is remembered, that these latter verses were written one hundred years before the former, I think that I shall not excite any surprise, when I say that I cannot discover in what consists the wonderful refinement, and improvement in versifica-

tion, which is boasted to have taken place during that period.

Pope was the great Poet of that age, and it is to him alone that English versification is indebted for all the improvement which it then received; an improvement which is confined to the heroic measure of ten syllables. That noble measure had hitherto been written very lawlessly and carelessly. Denham and Dryden alone, had reduced it to any thing like regularity and rule, and even they too often sanctioned, by their example, the blemishes of others. Of Pope, it is scarcely too much to say, that there is not a rough or discordant line in all that he has written. His thoughts, so often brilliant and original, sparkle more brightly by reason of the elegant and flowing rhymes in which they are expressed; and even where the idea is feeble, or common place, the music of the versification almost atones for it: the ear is satisfied, although the mind is disappointed. Still, it must be confessed, that Pope carried his refinements too far; his sweetness cloyes at last; his music wants the introduction of discords to give full effect to the harmony. The unpleasant effect produced upon the ear by the frequently running of the sense of one line with another, and especially of continuing the sentence from the last

line of one couplet to the first line of the next, Pope felt, and judiciously avoided. Still, for the sense always to find a pause with the couplet, and often with the rhyme, will necessarily produce something like tedium and sameness. Succeeding Authors have been conscious of this fault in Pope's versification, and have, in some measure, reverted to the practice of his predecessors. Lord Byron especially, has, by pauses in the middle of the line, and by occasionally, but with judgment and caution, running one line into another,—enormities, at which the Poet of whom we are now speaking would have been stricken with horror,—has frequently produced effects of which the well tuned, but somewhat fettered, Lyre of Pope was utterly incapable. It is, however, injustice to Pope, to speak of him so long as a mere versifier; great as his merits were in that respect, his Poetry, as we shall hereafter show, more at length, possessed recommendations of a higher and nobler order; keen Satire, deep pathos, great powers of description, and wonderful richness and energy of diction.

At this period, no attempt, worthy of our notice, was made at Epic Poetry, and the leaden sceptre of French taste was stretched over the Tragic Drama, and over Lyric, Pastoral, and descriptive

Poetry. The Tragedies of Shakspeare were driven from the Stage, to make way for those of Addison and Rowe; such Songs as my Lord Lansdowne's, of which I have given a specimen, were thought wonderfully natural and touching; and Pastoral and descriptive Poetry was in the hands of such rural swains as Ambrose Phillips, and others, who were called men of wit about town; who painted their landscapes after the model of Hyde Park, and the squares; and drew their sketches of rural life and manners from what they observed at the Levees and the Drawing-rooms of the great. Mere unsophisticated simple Nature was considered low and vulgar, and when Gay wrote his "*Eclogues*," which he intended should be burlesque, he went to the furthest possible remove from the fashionable and elegant way of writing Pastoral Poetry, and so, unconsciously produced a real and natural likeness of rustic scenery and society. There is a well known picture of day-break by Shakspeare, which, although comprised in two lines, possesses more of reality and vividness than can be found in whole volumes of diffuse description which I could name :

“ Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund Day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain's top.”

This passage would have been considered vile and vulgar by the critics of those days: the word “candles” would have been voted low and unpoetical, and “torches,” perhaps, substituted for it; “Day” would never have been described as standing “tiptoe,” but as with “foot upraised,” or “proudly advancing;” and what gentleman who walked about the Strand and the Mall, writing Pastoral poetry, would, when speaking of “mountain tops,” have thought of the mists which sometimes envelope them, or would have dreamed that such ugly accompaniments could possibly add to their sublimity and beauty? Shakspeare has so little idea of what is regal and Roman, that he shews us *Lear*, tottering about amidst the pelting of the storm, and taking shelter with a madman and a fool in a hovel; and describes *Julius Cæsar* as once shivering with an ague-fit;—

“Aye, and that tongue of his, that bade the Romans
Mark him, and write his speeches in their books,
Alas! it cried, ‘give me some drink, Titinius,’
Like a sick girl!”

In the Augustan age, however, things were ordered very differently;—“On avoit changé tout cela.” *Alexander* could not appear upon the Stage until

one of the persons of the Drama exclaims, “ Behold! the master of the world approaches!” *Cato*, when for the first time he sees the dead body of his son, does not as Shakspeare, in his ignorance, would have probably made him do,—

“ Shed some natural tears, but wipe them soon,”

but merely exclaims, “ What a pity it is that one can die but once to serve our country!” and, when the heroine of the “ *Cid*” learns that her Father has been slain by her lover, what does she do? In nature, she would faint, or at any rate she would certainly not think of ceremony, but in the Drama, she makes the politest of all possible curtsies to the company, and begs that they will excuse her retiring for a few moments!

The fact is, that the age of Anne rendered itself illustrious by it's Prose writings. It's Poetry is, with few exceptions, exceedingly mediocre. Pope, Gay, Swift, Steele, Shaftsbury, Addison, and Bolingbroke, are it's foremost Authors. Of these, the first alone is entitled to the rank of a great Poet, and the Poetry of the last five is too trifling and unimportant to be taken into the account.

The history of English Poetry for a long period afterwards presents a very dreary and melancholy

prospect. It is in the Didactic walk alone, which is the nearest allied to Prose, that we meet with any production approaching to excellence, with the exception of the beautiful Odes of Collins. Thomson, Akenside, Goldsmith, Young, and Dyer, are men to whom English Literature is greatly indebted, and who distinguished themselves as much as the narrow walk in which they chose to be confined would allow them. Thomson especially did much to bring back the artificial taste of the public to a just appreciation of natural scenes and sentiments, naturally described and expressed. His exclamation on the publication of Glover's "*Leonidas*," "What! *he* write an Epic Poem who never saw a mountain!" shews that he well knew that Nature was the only school in which true Poetry is taught. Yet even Thomson himself was somewhat infected with the taste of the age, and is too fond of pompous and high-sounding diction, in which we frequently find his beautiful thoughts obscured, instead of being adorned. This objection, however, does not apply to the "*Castle of Indolence*," the most delightful production of it's age. Akenside wrote elegantly and classically, with precision, and with energy. Goldsmith is perfection in every thing that he has done: the only thing to regret is, that he has done

so little. Young, so often turgid and declamatory, is not, I confess, much to my taste, although he has doubtless many bold and original thoughts, which he expresses very powerfully. Dyer, in his long Poem upon Sheep-shearing has made as much of so unpoetical a theme as could possibly be expected; but the theme, after all, had better have been let alone. The Epics of Blackmore, of Wilkie, and of Glover, once enjoyed considerable popularity. They have now passed into comparative oblivion; and, with the exception of the "*Leonidas*" of the last, they have achieved only the destiny which they merited. Glover was a Scholar, and a man of taste. His Poem is chaste, classical, and elegant; but at the same time, defective in action, character, passion, and interest. The sentiments are just, and eloquently expressed, and the imagery and descriptions are in strict congruity with the classical nature of the subject; but still the effect of the entire Poem is such, that we rather approve than admire. What Dr. Johnson said of his Dramatic namesake, may, with much more truth and propriety, be applied to Glover:—

"Cold approbation gives the lingering bays,
And those who dare not censure, scarce can praise."

But brighter days were about to dawn on English Poetical Literature. The public became satiated with the mediocrity with which their poetical caterers gorged them, and they began to turn their eyes upon the elder writers, whose traditionary fame still survived, and whose works were much talked of, although they were little read. Johnson and Steevens published their edition of Shakspeare; and so laid the foundation of that general knowledge and due appreciation of the merits of the great Dramatist, which forms so distinguishing and creditable a feature in the public taste at the present day. Percy gave to the world those invaluable literary treasures, the "*Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*," which, although at first received with coolness and neglect, eventually, by their simplicity and beauty, extorted general admiration; and, as Mr. Wordsworth has said, "absolutely redeemed the Poetry of this country."—"I do not think," adds this distinguished Author, "that there is an able writer in verse of the present day, who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the '*Reliques*.' I know that it is so with my friends; and for myself, I am happy to make a public avowal of my own." The new Edition of Shakspeare turned the attention of the public to the works of his contemporaries, and

Beaumont and Fletcher, Ford, Massinger, and Jonson, with all the world of literary wealth which their works contain, were given to the public by the successive labours of Seward, Whalley, Coleman, Weber, and Gifford. Ellis and Headley also published their "*Specimens of the Ancient English Poets*;" and Dr. Anderson sent forth into the world his Edition of the English Poets, including all those mighty Bards who were omitted in Dr. Johnson's Edition, by reason of the strange plan which he imposed upon himself, or which was dictated to him by others, of beginning that collection with the works of Cowley. An Author too, of a far higher character for originality of mind, purity of taste, simplicity of thought and expression, and deep observation of nature, than had come before the public for many years, appeared in the person of the highly-gifted, but ill-fated Cowper. The success of his exquisite "*Task*" was so rapid and brilliant, as to shew that the taste of the public had undergone a great revolution, since the time when the Pastorals of Phillips, the Heroics of Blackmore, and the Lyrics of Lansdowne, were it's favourite studies.

Into the merits and the authenticity of two works, which created an extraordinary sensation about this time, I shall have a more convenient opportunity

of enquiring in a subsequent Lecture. I mean the Poems attributed to Rowley the Saxon, and to Ossian the Celtic, Poets. The authenticity of the former appears to be a point which is now very generally given up; but that of the latter is a question with which the literary world is still agitated, and with which it will probably continue to be agitated, as long as the Poems themselves are extant.

Having thus endeavoured to lay before you the history of the rise and progress of English Poetry, from the days of Chaucer to those of Cowper, I do not intend to bring the enquiry down to a later period, or to venture upon any discussion of the merits of the writers of the present day. There is, however, one omission in my Lecture which may perhaps require an explanation. I have not directed your attention to the Scottish Poets who flourished during the period which has been embraced by our enquiries. This omission has occurred, not, I trust, from any insensibility to the merits of those distinguished writers, but from a consciousness of my own inability to speak critically upon the subject. To select a few names at random, Dunbar, the northern Chaucer; James the First, the only Monarch whose poetical laurels have been large enough to hide his diadem; and Burns, the

most exquisite Lyrical Poet which this nation or any other has ever yet possessed, are Authors whose merits, although they may be universally felt and appreciated, can only be critically expounded and pointed out by a native of the country to which they belong.

Here, therefore, must we pause for the present: the illustrious names which have “ been familiar in our mouths as household words,” carry their own eulogy along with them ; and I will venture to assert, that there are few persons who will refuse to echo the sentiment of a distinguished living writer ;—

“ Blessings be on them, and eternal praise,
The Poets !”

LECTURE THE SECOND.

EPIC AND NARRATIVE POETRY.

Epic Poetry in general:—Epic and Dramatic Poetry compared:—Critical distinction between Taste and Genius:—Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton compared:—The *Mirror for Magistrates*:—Lord Buckhurst:—Drayton:—Chamberlain's *Pharonnida*:—Chapman's Homer, and other old English Translations of Epic and Narrative Poetry:—Milton:—Influence of *Paradise Lost* on the National Taste:—*Paradise Regained*:—Cowley's *Davideis*:—Davenant:—Dryden:—The Translations of Rowe, Pope, &c. —Authenticity of Macpherson's Ossian:—Chatterton.

HAVING already treated the subject of English Poetry historically, and endeavoured to give a sketch of the revolutions in Public taste and opinion, I shall not consider myself any longer bound to speak of the Authors who may come under our review in any Chronological order, but shall classify them according to the nature of the subjects on which they have written. I shall, therefore, devote this, and the remaining Lectures, to the consideration,—First, of Epic and

Narrative Poetry; Secondly, of Dramatic Poetry; Thirdly, of Descriptive and Didactic Poetry; including Pastoral and Satire; and Fourthly, of Lyrical and Miscellaneous Poetry. In pursuance of which arrangement, we shall at present confine our attention to the subject of Epic and Narrative Poetry.

The production of a standard Epic Poem has been generally considered the highest effort of human genius, and so seldom has such an effort been made, that the rarity of such an occurrence alone, would seem to justify the very high estimate which has been formed of it's value. I will not attempt to say how many, or how few, Poems have been produced, which are really and truly of an Epic character. Some Critics maintain that there is only one, the production of the immortal Father of Poetry; others admit the "*Æneid*" into the list; Englishmen struggle to obtain the Epic bays for Milton; and the Italians, the Portuguese, and the Germans are equally strenuous in their advocacy of the rights of Tasso, of Camoens, and of Klopstock. Even granting all these claims, and I am not aware of another which is deserving of a moment's consideration, we shall find that the World has, during the Six thousand years of it's existence, produced only six Epic Poets.

I know that there are Critics who consider the Drama entitled to a higher rank than the *Epopée*. For my own part, I would rather

“ Bless the Sun, than reason how it shines :”—

I would rather enjoy the beauties of the Epic and the Dramatic Muses, than oppose them to each other, and awaken controversy as to their relative excellencies. As the subject, however, forces itself upon us, and as I mean to touch it reverently, for,—

“ We do it wrong, being so majestic,
To offer it the shew of violence,”

I will venture a few observations upon it. The Drama is to Epic Poetry, what Sculpture is to Historical Painting. It is, perhaps, on the whole, a severer Art. It rejects many adventitious aids of which the Epic may avail itself. It has more unity and simplicity. It's figures stand out more boldly, and in stronger relief. But then it has no aërial background ; it has no perspective of enchantment ; it cannot draw so largely on the imagination of the spectator ; it must present to the eye, and make palpable to the touch, what the Epic Poet may steep in the rainbow hues of Fancy, and veil,

but with a veil of light, woven in the looms of his Imagination. The *Epopée* comprises Narration and Description, and yet must be, in many parts, essentially Dramatic. The Epic Poet is the Dramatic Author and the Actor combined. The fine characteristic speech which Milton puts into the mouth of Moloch, in the Second Book of "*Paradise Lost*," proves him to have been possessed of high powers for Dramatic writing; and when, after the speech is concluded, the Poet adds,—

“ He ended frowning, and his look denounced
Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
To less than Gods :”—

he personates the character with a power and energy worthy of the noblest Actor. I have said that the Epic Poet is the Dramatist and the Actor combined; but he is more. He must not only write the Dialogue, and create the Actors who are to utter it, but he must also erect the Stage on which they are to tread, and paint the scenes in which they are to appear. Still, the Drama, by the very circumstances which condense and circumscribe it's powers, becomes capable of exciting a more intense and tremendous interest. Hence there are pieces of Dramatic writing which, even

in the perusal only, have an overwhelming power, to which Epic Poetry cannot attain. The Third Act of "*Othello*," the Dagger scene in "*Macbeth*," and the interview between *Wallenstein* and the *Swedish Captain*, may be adduced as instances. Perhaps, to sum up the whole question, what the Epic Poet gains in expansion and variety, the Dramatic Poet gains in condensation and intensity. When *Desdemona* says to *Othello*,—

“ And yet I fear,
When your eyes roll so ;”

we have as vivid a portrait of the Moor's countenance, as the most laboured description could give us. Again, how powerfully is the frown on the features of the *Ghost* in "*Hamlet*" pictured to us in two lines :—

“ So frown'd he once, when in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polack on the ice.”

Such descriptions would be meagre and unsatisfactory in Epic Poetry ; more diffuse ones would mar the interest, and impede the action in the Drama. In the Drama the grand pivot upon which the whole moves is Action ; in Epic Poetry it is narration. Narration is the fitter medium for representing a grand series of events ; and action

for exhibiting the power and progress of a passion, or the consequences of an incident. Hence, the siege of Troy, the wanderings of Ulysses, and the loss of Paradise, are Epic subjects; and the jealousy of *Othello*, the ambition of *Macbeth*, and the results of the ill-grounded partiality of *Lear*, are Dramatic ones. The Epic Poet takes a loftier flight; the Dramatist treads with a firmer step. The one dazzles; the other touches. The Epic is wondered at; the Drama is felt. We lift Milton like a conqueror above our heads; we clasp Shakspeare like a brother to our hearts!

Before I proceed further, it will be requisite to state the sense in which I shall use two words, which will necessarily occur very frequently in the course of these Lectures;—namely, Genius and Taste. Genius, I should say, is the power of production; Taste is the power of appreciation. Genius is creation; Taste is selection. Horace Walpole was a man of great Taste, without an atom of Genius. Nathaniel Lee was a man of Genius, without Taste. Dryden had more Genius than Pope. Pope had more Taste than Dryden. Many instances may be adduced of obesity of Taste in men of Genius; especially with reference to their own works. Milton, who had Genius enough to produce “*Paradise Lost*,” had not

Taste enough to perceive it's superiority over "*Paradise Regained*." Rowe, who produced so many successful Tragedies, all of which—although I am no violent admirer of them,—possessed a certain degree of merit, valued himself most upon the wretched ribaldry in his Comedy of the "*Biter*." Dr. Johnson was proud of his Dictionary, and looked upon the "*Rambler*" as a trifle of which he ought almost to be ashamed. The timidity and hesitation with which many juvenile Authors have ventured to lay their works before the public, and their surprise when public opinion has stamped them as works of high merit, have been attributed to humility and bashfulness. The fact, however, is often otherwise; it is not humility, but want of Taste. Genius, or the power of producing such works, is not accompanied by Taste, or the power of appreciating them. Taste is of later growth in the mind than Genius; and the reason is, I think, obvious. Genius is innate; a part and portion of the mind; born with it; while Taste is the result of observation, and enquiry, and experience. However the folly and vanity of ignorance and presumption may have deluged the public with worthless productions, there can be no doubt that the deficiency of Taste in men of Genius, has deprived the world of many

a work of merit and originality. Genius is often startled at the boldness of her own ideas ; while,

“ Fools rush in, where Angels fear to tread.”

Having said thus much in explanation of the sense in which I shall use two words, which are so often employed in a vague and indefinite manner, let us return to the immediate subject before us. It has been said that English Literature cannot boast of the possession of any work which is strictly entitled to be denominated an Epic Poem. I know not exactly what this assertion means. If it mean that the works of the English Poets are not curiously and exactly modelled after the example of classical writers; then I admit and I glory in it's truth. The great characteristic of English Literature, from the days of Chaucer to the present time, has been it's originality. Words are arbitrary, and I care not greatly whether the specific term Epic can be appropriately applied to the works of Chaucer, or of Spenser, or of Milton. If the Critics who are such strenuous advocates for the exclusive possession of the Epic bays by Homer and Virgil, will be conciliated by such a concession, I will be content that “ *Paradise Lost* ” shall be called a Divine Poem ; the “ *Fairy Queen*,” a

Romantic Poem; and the "*Canterbury Tales*," a Narrative Poem. If original Genius, if severe Taste, if profound knowledge of human nature, if a luxuriant imagination, and a rich and copious diction, entitle a Poet to the highest honours of his Art, then are the three illustrious Englishmen whom I have named, whether I may call them Epic Poets, or not, eminently and incontestibly entitled to those honours.

These three Poets have not many points of comparison. They are each original and great. If I may be allowed to illustrate my opinions by a reference to the sister art, I should say, that Chaucer's outlines are more spirited and graceful; but that Spenser is the finer colourist. Chaucer I should compare to Raffaele; Spenser to Rubens: but then Chaucer combined with all his elegance and beauty, many laughing graces which neither his brother bard, nor the illustrious artist whom I have just named, possessed. If one could suppose a congruity in such a combination, I should say that Chaucer was Raffaele and Teniers combined: Raffaele, perhaps, a little lowered from his pinnacle of dignity and elegance, and Teniers certainly much elevated above his vulgarity and grossnesses. For the genius of Milton, I can hardly find a fitting comparison. When he sets the Deity

in arms, when he marshals myriads of malignant Spirits in battle array against Omnipotence, when he paints the bliss of Heaven, and the horrors of Hell, he reminds me of the power and sublimity of Michael Angelo: when he shews us our first Parents, sinless, artless, and endowed with godlike beauty;—

“ Adam the goodliest Man of men since born
His sons; the fairest of her daughters, Eve;”

he exhibits all the grace and beauty of Raffaele: when he paints the happy fields of Paradise, where Nature played at will her virgin fancies, he seems to have caught the pencil of Claude Lorraine; and when we listen to the solemn and majestic flow of his verse, and the ear dwells on the rich harmony of his periods, we are reminded of another Art, and feel that neither Mozart, nor Handel, could produce Music so perfect and soul-stirring as that of Milton.

In the former Lecture I discussed, as fully as my limits would permit me, the merits of Chaucer, the Father of English Poetry. Spenser is an Author of a very different stamp. To Wit or Humour, he has no pretensions. Neither are his delineations of human character at all comparable

to those of his great predecessor. Chaucer's knowledge of the heart of man was almost Shakespearean. Spenser had, however, a richer imagination. He was a greater inventor, although a less acute observer. Chaucer was incapable of creating such original imaginary beings as the Fays, Elves, Heroes, and Heroines of Spenser; and Spenser was equally incapable of the exquisite truth and fidelity of Chaucer's portraitures from real life. There is also a fine moral and didactic tone running through the "*Fairy Queen*," which we look for in vain, in the "*Canterbury Tales*." Spenser's imagery is magnificent. His descriptive powers are of the highest order. Here the two Poets approximate more than in any other particular: yet, even here they essentially differ. Spenser paints Fairy haunts, enchanted Palaces, unearthly Paradises, things such as *Caliban* saw in his sleep, and, "waking, cried to dream again." Chaucer's pencil depicts the smiling verdant English landscape, which we see before us every day; the grass, the flowers, the brooks, the blue sky, and the glowing sun.

When we open the volumes of Spenser, we leave this "working-day world," as *Rosalind* calls it, behind us. We are no longer in it, or of it. We are introduced to a new creation, new scenes,

new manners, new characters. The laws of Nature are suspended, or reversed. The possible, the probable, and the practicable, all these are thrown behind us. The mighty Wizard whose spell is upon us, waves but his wand, and a new World starts into existence, inhabited by nothing but the marvellous and the wild. Spenser is the very antipodes of Shakspeare. The latter is of the earth, earthy. His most ethereal fancies have some touch of mortality about them. His wildest and most visionary characters savour of humanity. Whatever notes he draws forth from his Harp, it is the strings of the human heart that he touches. Spenser's Hero is always Honour, Truth, Valour, Courtesy, but it is *not* Man. His Heroine is Meekness, Chastity, Constancy, Beauty, but it is *not* Woman ;—his landscapes are fertility, magnificence, verdure, splendour, but they are *not* Nature. His pictures have no relief; they are all light, or all shadow; they are all wonder, but no truth. Still do I not complain of them; nor would I have them other than what they are. They are delightful, and matchless in their way. They are dreams: glorious, soul-entrancing dreams. They are audacious, but magnificent falsehoods. They are like the Palaces built in the clouds; the domes, the turrets, the towers, the long-drawn terraces,

the ærial battlements, who does not know that they have no stable existence? but, who does not sigh when they pass away?

The “*Mirror for Magistrates*” was a work to which many of the most eminent Writers in Elizabeth’s Reign contributed. It consists of Narratives of the adventures of certain Princes, and other great characters in English history, whose lives had been unfortunate. It’s incidents are founded on the old Chronicles, which, indeed, are followed so servilely in general, as to give to the work a very prosaic character, and to take from it all claim to originality. The most valuable portion of it is the Induction, by Lord Buckhurst. The Poet supposes himself to be led, like Dante, to the Infernal Regions, under the conduct of Sorrow; where he meets with the Spirits of those persons, alike distinguished for their high station, and their misfortunes, whose narrations compose the Volume. He also meets with various Allegorical characters: such as Fear, Sorrow, Old Age, Sleep, and Death; and it is in the wonderful power and spirit with which the Poet personifies these allegorical beings, that the great merit of his work consists. What, for instance, can be finer, or truer, than the following picture of Old Age?—

“ And next in order sad Old Age we found ;
 His beard all hoar, his eyes hollow and blind,
 With drooping cheer still poring on the ground,
 As on the place where nature him assign’d
 To rest, when that the Sisters had untwined
 His vital thread, and ended with their knife,
 The fleeting course of fast-declining life.

* * * * *

Crookback’d he was, tooth-shaken, and blear-eyed,
 Went on three feet, and sometimes crept on four ;
 With old lame bones that rattled by his side,
 His scalp all piled, and he with eld forlore ;
 His wither’d fist still knocking at Death’s door.
 Trembling and drivelling as he draws his breath,
 In brief, the shape and messenger of Death.”

Sleep is also delineated with the pencil of a master :—

“ By him lay heavy Sleep, Cousin of Death,
 Flat on the ground, and still as any stone ;
 A very corpse, save yielding forth a breath ;
 Small keep took he, whom Fortune frowned on,
 Or whom she lifted up into the Throne
 Of high renown ; but as a living death,
 So dead alive, of life he drew the breath.

The body’s rest, the quiet of the heart,
 The travail’s ease, the still Night’s fere was he,
 And of our life in earth the better part ;
 Rever of sight, and yet in whom we see
 Things oft’ that ’tide, and oft’ that never be.

Without respect, esteeming equally
King Cræsus' pomp, and Irus' poverty."

The following description of Night may likewise challenge a comparison with any thing on the same subject in the language:—

" Midnight was come, when every vital thing
 With sweet, sound sleep their weary limbs did rest ;
The beasts were still, the little birds that sing,
 Now sweetly slept beside their mother's breast,
The old and all were shrouded in their nest ;
The waters calm, the cruel seas, did cease,
The woods, and fields, and all things held their peace.

The golden Stars were whirl'd amid their race,
 And on the Earth did laugh with twinkling light ;
When each thing nestled in his resting place,
 Forgot Day's pains with pleasure of the Night :
The hare had not the greedy hound in sight ;
The fearful deer of death stood not in doubt ;
The partridge dreamt not of the falcon's foot."

I have not time to dwell at large upon the merits of the other Narrative Poets of the Elizabethan age. Drayton was a man of real genius ; but, like many of his contemporaries, he was a bad economist of his powers. He wasted them upon unworthy subjects ; and often exhibits feebleness, on occasions where the exertion of his highest

powers is demanded and deserved. Warner in his "*Albion's England*" has preserved many of our old national traditions, and embellished them with much truth, nature, and simplicity. The Ballad stanza, however, in which he writes, becomes tedious and fatiguing, when excruciated to the length in which he employs it. Chamberlain's "*Pharonnida*" is a very noble work. The characters are drawn and supported with great truth and force; the action of the Poem is eventful and interesting, and the images bold, natural, and original. A very few instances will suffice to shew how rich the Poem is in the latter particular. Joys not yet mature, or consummated, are elegantly said to be

" Clothed in fresh
Blossoms of Hope, like Souls ere mix'd with flesh :"

and Hope is styled

" That wanton bird that sings as soon as hatch'd."

The agitation of *Pharonnida*, when discovered by her Father with her Lover's letter in her hand, is thus described :—

" She stands
A burthen to her trembling legs, her hands

Wringing each other's ivory joints, her bright
Eyes scattering their distracted beams."

May wrote the Histories of Henry the Second, and of Edward the Third, in verse. He also translated the "*Georgics*" of Virgil, and the "*Pharsalia*" of Lucan. The last is a performance of great merit; as is also the continuation of the Poem to the death of Julius Cæsar, by the translator. The Reign of Queen Elizabeth was peculiarly rich in Poetical translations. Fairfax's Tasso, which was so long and so strangely neglected, is now recovering it's popularity. Of all the strange caprices of the Public taste, there is none more strange, than the preference which was given to the rhyme-tagged prose of Hoole, over this spirited and truly poetical production of Fairfax. Chapman's Homer, with all it's faults, is also a production of great value and interest. The "*Iliad*" is written in the cumbrous and unwieldy old English measure of fourteen syllables, which, however, the Author had the judgment to abandon in the "*Odyssey*," for the heroic measure of ten. The following description from the Thirteenth Book of the "*Iliad*," of Neptune and his chariot, will, notwithstanding it's occasional quaintness, sufficiently prove the power and energy of the Translator:—

“ He took much ruth to see the Greeks from Troy receive
such ill,
And mightily incenst with Jove, stoop'd straight from that
steep hill ;
That shook as he flew off, so hard his parting press'd the
height,
The woods and all the great hills near, trembled beneath the
weight
Of his immortal moving feet: three steps he only took,
Before he far off Ægas reach'd ; but with the fourth it
shook
With his dread entry. In the depth of those seas he did
hold
His bright and glorious Palace, built of never-rusting gold ;
And there arrived, he put in coach his brazen footed steeds,
All golden-maned, and paced with wings, and all in golden
weeds
He clothed himself; the golden scourge, most elegantly done,
He took, and mounted to his seat, and then the God begun
To drive his chariot through the waves. From whirlpits
every way
The whales exulted under him, and knew their King ; the
Sea
For joy did open, and his horse so light and swiftly flew,
The under axle-tree of brass no drop of water drew.”

Chapman is remarkable for translating literally the compound epithets of the Greeks, which are so very striking and powerful in the original ; but which, unhappily, cannot be transferred to our language with the same felicity. Pope calls Juno

“ the Goddess of the large majestic eyes,” which is certainly a somewhat too free amplification of the original epithet. Chapman more literally, but I am afraid not more happily, calls her “ the cow-eyed Queen.”

Crashaw’s Translation of Marino’s “ *Sospetti d’ Herode* ” is the best, or, I believe the only, version in our language, of a work of singular beauty and originality ; to which Milton is clearly indebted for hints for some of the finest passages in “ *Paradise Lost*.” These works, together with Harrington’s Ariosto, and other translations of the same period from the classical and Italian Poets, deserve to be much better known to the public, at least in the shape of extract and specimen. We have been regaled with Specimens of old English Ballads, of old English Metrical Romances, and of old English Dramatists, and I hope that it will not be long before some Editor of competent taste and research, will present us with Specimens of the old English Translators.

The Second great name in the annals of English Poetry is Milton : which is the First, of course, I need not say. Many other Poets have excelled him in variety and versatility ; but none ever approached him in intensity of style and thought, in unity of purpose, and in the power and grandeur

with which he piles up the single monument of Genius, to which his mind is for the time devoted. His Harp may have but one string, but that is such an one, as none but his own finger knows how to touch. “*Paradise Lost*” has few inequalities; few feeblenesses. It seems not like a work taken up and continued at intervals; but one continuing effort; lasting, perhaps, for years, yet never remitted: elaborated with the highest polish, yet with all the marks of ease and simplicity in its composition. To begin with the least of Milton’s merits, what Author ever knew how to

“ Untwist all the links that tie
The hidden soul of Harmony,”

as he did? Whence came his knowledge? What rules or system did he proceed upon, in building up his magnificent Stanza? And what has become of the discovery which he made? for assuredly it has not been preserved by his successors. There is no blank verse worthy of the name, — real verse, not measured prose, but the legitimate medium for the expression of the thoughts and feelings of Poetry,—beyond the volumes of Milton.

The peculiar distinguishing feature of Milton’s Poetry is its Sublimity. The sublime is reached

by other Poets when they excel themselves, and hover for a moment amidst unusual brightness; but it is Milton's native reign. When he descends, it is to meet the greatness of others; when he soars, it is to reach heights unattainable by any but himself. The first two Books of "*Paradise Lost*" are one continuous effort of unmitigated sublimity. I know of no spot, or blemish, or inequality, or falling off, from the beginning of the First Book to the close of the Second; and then, how wonderfully fine is the contrast, when the Third Book opens with that inimitably pathetic address to Light, in which the Poet alludes, with a pardonable egotism, to the calamity under which he is himself suffering:—

“ Hail holy Light! offspring of Heaven first-born,
Or of th' eternal co-eternal beam !”

Because Milton is universally admitted to excel in sublimity, some Critics have chosen to deny him pathos: but this is the very cant of Criticism, which will insist upon it that the faults of every Author must balance his excellencies, and which delights in nothing but antithesis. Thus Shakspeare we are told, is a great but irregular Genius; Jonson is a powerful but a rough and coarse writer; and Mil-

ton is a sublime but not a pathetic Poet : whereas the plain fact, obvious to all who take the trouble to examine it, is, that Shakspeare is *not* an irregular Genius, that Jonson is *not* a rough or coarse writer, that Milton is a pathetic Poet, and a writer of powerful, of tremendous pathos.

Need I, to prove my last assertion, do more than direct your attention to Adam's lament after his fall; to Eve's farewell to Paradise; or to Satan, when about to address his adherents, and endeavouring to assume the tone and aspect of a God, bursting involuntarily into tears,—“tears such as Angels shed,”—as the remembrance of the height from which he has fallen, forces itself upon his memory, and compels this evidence of his weakness. Milton's descriptive powers are also of the highest order. Whether he paints landscape, or history, it is with the pencil of a master. The burning lake, the bowers of Paradise, Angels and Demons, Humanity and Deity, all are portrayed with unerring fidelity and truth. There are indeed few things by which a writer of real Genius is more easily known, than by his descriptions. This is the most difficult, and the most delightful chord of the Poet's harp; and there is perhaps nothing in the whole range of Poetry which gives so much unmixed pleasure, as that descriptive of

natural objects ; while, at the same time, in nothing is a depraved taste, or a defect of genius, sooner discovered, or more intolerable. A great fault into which descriptive writers too commonly fall, is the vagueness and indistinctness of their pictures : they have no specific likeness. Every thing is described in generals. No new ideas are conveyed to the mind ; but a dim and shadowy phantom seems to haunt the brain of the writer. This arises, either from ignorance of the objects described, or from a want of Taste to seize and appropriate their characteristic features. Whoever enjoys but faint and imperfect conceptions himself, must fail in presenting any very vivid or striking pictures to others. If we were to cause the representations of many of our modern Poets to be faithfully transferred to the canvas, we should quickly discover how defective and unnatural, how utterly shapeless and monstrous, some of their most celebrated delineations are.

Opposed to this fault, is another equally fatal, which descends so minutely and curiously into particulars, neither governed by taste in the selection, or judgment in the appropriation of circumstances, that, instead of a noble picture, we are presented with a piece of fantastical patchwork. Such writers stand in much the same relation to the

masters of descriptive Poetry, as a book of the roads in the neighbourhood of Claude's most celebrated scenes, to his enchanting paintings. The following extract from Cowley will sufficiently illustrate what I mean. It is a description of the Angel Gabriel, as he appeared to David :—

“ He took for skin, a cloud most soft and bright,
That ere the mid-day Sun pierced through with light ;
Upon his cheeks a lively blush he spread,
Wash'd from the Morning's beauties' deepest red ;
An harmless flaming meteor shone for hair,
And fell adown his shoulders with loose care ;
He cuts out a silk mantle from the skies,
Where the most sprightly azure pleased the eyes ;
This he with starry vapours sprinkles all,
Took in their prime, ere they grow ripe and fall ;
Of a new rainbow ere it fret or fade,
The choicest piece cut off, a scarf is made.”

Dr. Johnson justly says, that “ Cowley could not let us go till he had related where Gabriel got first his skin, and then his mantle, then his lace, and then his scarf, and related it in the terms of the Mercer and Tailor.” But how happily, on the contrary, has Milton described the same object, “ a Seraph winged :”—

“ Six wings he wore to shade
His lineaments divine. The pair that clad

Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
With regal ornament ; the middle pair
Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round,
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold,
And colours dipt in heaven ; the third his feet
Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood,
And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide."

The same immortal master has touched with a yet
finer and more delicate pencil, the persons of our
first parents in Paradise :—

" Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honour clad,
In naked majesty, seem'd lords of all ;
And worthy seem'd ; for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone ;
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
Severe, but in true filial freedom placed,
Whence true authority in men ; though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd :
For contemplation he, and valour form'd ;
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace ;
He for God only, she for God in him.
His fair large front, and eye sublime, declared
Absolute rule ; and hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad ;
She as a veil, down to her slender waist,
Her unadorned golden tresses wore

Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets waved,
As the vine curls her tendrils."

Cowley is one of the earliest names of eminence in the history of English Lyrical Poetry, and it is principally in reading his Odes that we lament those metaphysical conceits, which obscure the reputation of a genius of first-rate ability. But "the light that led astray was light from Heaven." His very faults are the offspring of Genius; they are the exuberances of a mind "o'er-informed with meaning;" the excrescences of a tree, whose waste foliage, if properly pruned and arranged, would form an immortal wreath on the brows of any humbler genius. But he now claims our notice in another character, that of a Narrative Poet, as the Author of the " *Davideis; or, the Troubles of David*," a Sacred Poem; a character in which it must be confessed he appears to far less advantage than as a Lyrical Poet. The " *Davideis*" is much more disfigured by far-fetched conceits than even his Odes; and they offend still more against good Taste, when we find them mixed up with the sobriety of narration, than when they mingle in his Pindaric ecstasies. The narrative itself is also heavy and uninteresting; there are no strongly drawn or predominating characters;

and the Allegorical personages, who are the chief actors, do not, of course, excite any strong interest, or greatly arrest the attention. Still there are many scattered beauties throughout the Poem ; many original ideas, and much brilliant versification. The following is very sweetly expressed :—

“ Upon their Palace’ top, beneath a row
Of lemon trees, which there did proudly grow,
And with bright stores of golden fruit repay
The light they drank from the Sun’s neighbouring ray,
A small but artful Paradise, they walk’d,
And hand in hand, sad, gentle things they talk’d.”

The account of the Creation is also full of eloquence and Poetry :—

“ They sung how God spoke-out the World’s vast ball,
From nothing ; and from nowhere call’d forth all.
No Nature yet, or place for’t to possess,
But an unbottom’d gulph of emptiness ;
Full of himself, th’ Almighty sate, his own
Palace, and without solitude, alone.
But he was goodness whole, and all things will’d ;
Which ere they were, his active word fulfill’d :
And their astonish’d heads o’ th’ sudden rear’d ;
An unshaped kind of something first appear’d,
Confessing it’s new being, and undrest,
As if it stepp’d in haste before the rest ;
Yet, buried in this matter’s darksome womb,
Lay the rich seeds of every thing to come ;

From hence the cheerful flame leap'd up so high,
Close at it's heels the nimble air did fly;
Dull Earth with his own weight did downwards pierce
To the fix'd navel of the Universe,
And was quite lost in waters; till God said
To the proud Sea, 'Shrink in your insolent head;
See how the gaping Earth has made you place!'
That durst not murmur, but shrunk in apace:
Since when, his bounds are set; at which in vain
He foams and rages, and turns back again.
With richer stuff he bade Heaven's fabric shine,
And from him a quick spring of light divine
Swell'd up the Sun, from whence his cherishing flame
Fills the whole world, like him from whom it came.
He smooth'd the rough-cast Moon's imperfect mould,
And comb'd her beamy locks with sacred gold:
'Be thou,' said he, 'Queen of the mournful Night!'
And as he spake, she rose, clad o'er in light,
With thousand Stars attending in her train,
With her they rise, with her they set again.
Then Herbs peep'd forth, now Trees admiring stood,
And smelling Flowers painted the infant wood;
Then flocks of birds through the glad air did flee,
Joyful, and safe before Man's luxury;
Singing their Maker in their untaught lays:
Nay the mute Fish witness no less his praise;
For those he made, and clothed with silver scales,
From Minnows to those living islands, Whales.
Beasts, too, were his command; what could he more?
Yes, Man he could, the bond of all before;
In him he all things with strange order hurl'd,
In him that full abridgment of the World!"

There are likewise many beautiful Lyrical pieces introduced. The following in which David speaks of his love for Saul's daughter is a perfect gem:—

“Awake, awake my Lyre!
And tell thy silent master's humble tale,
In sounds that may prevail;
 Sounds that gentle thoughts inspire:
 Though so exalted she,
 And I so lowly be,
Tell her, such different notes make all thy harmony!

Hark! how the strings awake!
And though the moving hand approach not near,
Themselves with awful fear
 A kind of numerous trembling make:
 Now all thy forces try,
 Now all thy charms apply,
Revenge upon her ear the conquests of her eye.

Weak Lyre! thy virtue sure
Is useless here, since thou art only found
To cure, but not to wound;
 And she to wound but not to cure:
 Too weak too wilt thou prove
 My passion to remove,
Physic to other ills, thou'rt nourishment to Love.

Sleep, sleep again, my Lyre!
For thou can'st never tell my humble tale,
In sounds that will prevail;
 Nor gentle thoughts in her inspire;
 All thy vain mirth lay by,
 Bid thy strings silent lie;
Sleep, sleep again, my Lyre! and let thy master die!”

Unhappily, however,—

“ Men’s evil manners live in brass,
Their virtues we write in water;”—

The “ *Davideis* ” is now seldom quoted; and when it is noticed, it is not for the purpose of recalling to our recollection the brilliant passages which I have just cited. If the Poem live at all in the memory of the general reader, it is by reason of two ridiculous lines, descriptive of the sword of Goliath:—

“ A Sword so great, that it was only fit
To cut off his great head that came with it!”

In discussing the merits of our remaining Narrative Poets, I shall be necessarily brief. Davenant’s “ *Gondibert* ” is very defective both in interest and passion. As a Narrative, it is not entitled to any high praise; though there are passages in it replete with beautiful imagery, and genuine and unaffected sentiment. We have not, however, space for any quotations; and Dryden’s “ *Fables*,” and his “ *Æneid*,” are too generally known to need any. That Author’s fame as a Narrative Poet rests upon these. The matter is all borrowed. The “ *Fables* ” are as much translations from Boccacio, and Chaucer, as his

“*Æneid*” is from Virgil. The matter, I have said, is not Dryden’s, but the manner is all his own; and in that their great charm consists. The energy, the beauty, the power, the majesty, and the delicacy of his style, are unrivalled. His versification is even now, notwithstanding the efforts of his successors, Pope, Goldsmith, Campbell, and Byron, the noblest and most perfect in our language. As Milton in blank verse, so Dryden in the heroic rhymed measure, is without a competitor or even an approximator.

“ Waller was smooth, but Dryden taught to join
The varying verse, the full resounding line,
The long majestic march, and energy divine.”

The Translations of Rowe, Pitt, Pope, and Mickle, have enriched our language with the noblest monuments of the genius of foreign nations. To Rowe and Pitt may be assigned the merit of fidelity, and of considerable powers in versification. Pope and Mickle, the former especially, are very splendid writers: though the latter must rank among the most unfaithful of translators. Of Pope I have already spoken at some length, and we shall hereafter have occasion to consider his merits as a Didactic, and Descriptive Poet. I shall therefore, not now enter into any discussion of the subject.

Glover's "*Leonidas*" I have also already noticed; and the Epics of Wilkie and Blackmore, are really not worth our attention. The latter has made himself immortal by two memorable lines, which will suffice as a specimen of his merits:—

“ A painted vest Prince Vortigern had on,
Which from a *naked* Pict his grandsire won!”

The authenticity of the Poems ascribed to Ossian, is a subject full of doubt and intricacy, into the mazes of which it is not my intention to enter. It is difficult to believe that Poems formed so nearly upon the Aristotlean rules, should have been produced in an age, and amongst a people, where those rules were totally unknown: it is still more difficult to believe that such Poems, never having been written, should have been preserved through so many ages, by oral tradition alone: but, perhaps, an attentive reader would declare that, all circumstances considered, it would be the greatest difficulty of all to believe, that the whole is a modern invention. The absence of all traces of Religion, however, in these Poems, is a very singular fact, and strikes me as a strong argument against their authenticity; as the Poetical compositions of all other nations are so closely connected

with their mythology. The rocky steeps of Morven too, do not seem to be a very appropriate scene for the exploits of "*car-borne*" heroes; and Mr. Wordsworth adds his own personal experience, and it is a high authority, against the probability of the genuineness of Ossian's Poems, by saying, that no man who has been born and bred up among mountain scenery, as Ossian was, would describe it as he has done. This objection, however, cuts both ways. These Poems were written, if not by Ossian, by Macpherson, and Macpherson was himself an Highlander. I have also heard more than one Landscape Painter of eminence, well acquainted with the scenery of the Poems,—and such evidence I cannot help considering of considerable weight,—bear testimony to the power and fidelity of Ossian's descriptions. The beauty and merit of the Poems is, however, a question quite independent of their authenticity. For myself, I confess that the most popular and most often quoted passages are not my greatest favourites. Ossian's most laboured efforts do not strike me as his best. It is in a casual expression, in a single simple incident, that he often startles us by the originality and force of his ideas. What a picture of desolation does he force upon our imagination when describing the ruins of Balclutha

by that one unlaboured, but powerful incident:—"The fox looked out from the window." The ghost of Crugal, the dim and shadowy visitant from another world, is also painted by a single stroke of the pencil:—"The stars dim twinkled through his form:" and the early death of Cormac is prophesied in a simile as original, as it is powerful:—"Death stands dim behind thee, like the darkened half of the moon behind it's growing light." Had Ossian, or the Author of the pieces ascribed to him, written nothing but the three passages which I have just cited, he would have proved himself a genuine Poet.

The grand characteristic of Ossian is pathos, as that of Homer is invention, and that of Milton is sublimity. Whether he describes scenery, or delineates character, or narrates events, tenderness is the predominating feeling excited in the mind. His battle-pieces impress us more with compassion for the vanquished, than admiration for the victor. We feel more sympathy for the sufferings of his heroines, than we do of delight at their beauty. His heroes, if young, are cut off before their fame is achieved; or if old, have survived their strength and prowess. Even Fingal himself, is at last shewn to us as a feeble ghost, lamenting the loss of his mortal fame and vigour.

I have placed Chatterton amongst the narrative Poets, although he also wrote Dramatic, lyrical, and didactic pieces. Perhaps there never was a more slender veil of forgery attempted, than that which he threw around his pretended ancient productions. He has written in the language of no one age, but in a piebald diction of all; made up of the phrases and idioms of various periods, and the reader has often nothing to do, but to strip his verses of their antique spelling, and he finds the language precisely that which is used in the present day. Take for instance, the opening of the Song of Ella:—

“ When Freedom drest in blood-stain’d vest,
To every land her War-song sung;
Upon her head wild weeds were spread,
A gory anlace by her hung.”

The Poems themselves bear internal evidence of their being the productions of a boy; of a marvellous boy indeed, but still of a boy. There are no traces of experience, of long observation, of a knowledge of Human nature, and indeed of acquirement of any sort. Of strong natural powers, of talent, of genius, every page furnishes us with abundant instances. Chatterton’s forte I think

was pathos ; and had not his mortal career closed so prematurely, he would probably have devoted himself to Lyrical Poetry. What he has left behind him, is full of genius ; but full of inequalities and faults. We have hardly sufficient data to enable us to judge what Chatterton's real character, moral or literary,—and it is difficult to separate them in our enquiry,—was, or would have been. I, for one, cannot help thinking, that the vices of the former were adventitious, and that the imperfections of the latter would have been obviated, or removed. His tale is but half told. Had not the curtain dropt so abruptly on the hero of the Drama, succeeding scenes might have shewn him triumphing over all his follies, and atoning for all his faults. His ruling passion was the love of fame. The progress of Fame is like the course of the Thames, which in it's native fields will scarcely float the toy-ship which an infant's hand has launched, but when it has once visited the metropolis, mighty vessels ride upon it's bosom, and it rolls on irresistibly to the ocean. This Chatterton knew ; and, in a blind confidence on his own unaided powers, rushed to the capital in pursuit of fame and competence. The result we all know was neglect, penury, and self-destruction.

Narrative Poetry has of late been a favourite

and popular study, and has employed the pens of all the most eminent of our living writers. Although the limits which I have prescribed to myself in these Lectures, do not permit to discuss their merits, I may be allowed to say, that the Narrative writers of the present day, have done much to wean the public taste from the meretricious school by which it was directed half a century ago, and bring it back to a wholesome appreciation of the powers of those genuine old English Poets, whose teacher was Nature, and whose study was the human heart.

LECTURE THE THIRD.

DRAMATIC POETRY.

Origin of the Drama :—Old English Mysteries and Moralities :
 —*Gorboduc* and *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, the first English
 Tragedy and Comedy :—The Predecessors of Shakspeare :
 —Dramatic Writers of the Reigns of Elizabeth and James
 the First :—Shakspeare :—Dissertation on the excellence
 of his Female Characters and Clowns :—Jonson :—The
 Beauty of the Lyrical parts of Jonson's Dramas :—His
 Tragedy of *Catiline* :—Cartwright :—Beaumont and
 Fletcher :—Massinger :—Ford and Webster.

MY last Lecture treated of the Epic and Narrative Poets ; I shall now briefly review the merits of the Dramatic Poets who flourished previous to the Restoration. Although, in a period of elegance and refinement, there is not a more certain “ sign of the times ” than a taste for Dramatic entertainments, yet the fact is, that these had their origin in the rudest, and most uninformed ages of society. In ancient Greece, Thespis, the Father of Tragedy, represented his Dramas on a sort of cart, or moveable stage, which was drawn from place to

place ; and his Actors sang and danced alternately, with their faces smeared with wine-lees :—

“ *Ignotum Tragicæ genus invenisse camoenæ
Dicitur, et plaustris vexisse poemata Thespis,
Quæ canerent agerentque peruncti fœcibus ora.*”

HOR. ART. POET.

In England, in the same manner, the original of those magnificent structures which are now dedicated to the Dramatic Muses, were moveable pageants, drawn about upon wheels ; after which, the court-yards of inns and hostelries were chosen for Dramatic representations ; the floor forming what we now call the Pit of the Theatre, and the Balconies, or galleries around, being occupied as the Boxes and the Stage ; and public Theatres do not appear to have been regularly erected till about the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The Drama, it is also worthy of remark, although it has become the theme of constant depreciation among modern Puritans, as it was formerly among the ancient Philosophers, had it's origin in Religious ceremonies. The Hymns, or Odes, sung in honour of Bacchus, and other Deities in Greece, and the Mysteries and Moralities of Monkish times in England, were the rude foundations on which

were erected the splendid superstructures of *Æschylus*, and *Euripides*, and *Sophocles*; of *Shakspeare*, of *Fletcher*, and of *Otway*. In the houses of the great it was as much the custom of the Chaplain to compose Plays for the families, as it now is to write Sermons; and Sunday was a day frequently appropriated for the representation of dramatic entertainments. Modern readers shudder at the impiety of the ancients, who represented their Gods in *propria persona* upon the Stage, while it is not less true, although less generally known, that in our own country, the Divine persons of the Trinity, the good and evil Angels, the Prophets, and the Apostles, were in the same manner personated in the English Theatres.

The first regular Comedy which appeared in England was "*Gammer Gurton's Needle*." The precise time of its representation is unknown, but an edition of it is said by Chetwood, to have been printed in 1551; and the copy which Dodsley used for his collection of Old Plays was printed in 1575. "In this Play," says Hawkins, "there is a vein of familiar humour, and a kind of grotesque imagery, not unlike some parts of *Aristophanes*; but without those graces of language and metre, for which the Greek Comedian is so eminently distinguished." There is certainly much

whim and wit in many of the situations; and the characters, although rudely, are very forcibly delineated. The plot is simple and coarse enough. *Gammer Gurton* has lost her needle, and, just when she despairs of ever finding it, it is discovered sticking to part of her servant *Hodge's* breeches, which she had been lately employed in mending. The fine old Song, beginning "Back and sides, go bare, go bare," with which the Second Act of this Play opens, is of itself sufficient to rescue it from oblivion.

Lord Buckhurst's "*Gorboduc*" is the first regular Tragedy which ever appeared in England. The plot is meagre and uninteresting; the diction cumbrous and heavy; and the characters ill conceived, and hastily drawn. The dawn of English Tragedy was, therefore, as gloomy as it's meridian was splendid. George Peele, the Author of "*The Loves of King David and Fair Bethsabe*," was a Writer of a very different stamp; and, although not possessing much force and originality, there is a vein of pathos and unaffected feeling in this Play, and a sweetness and flow of versification, which we look for in vain in the writings of his contemporaries. Lily, who turned the heads of the people by his Euphuism, which has been so happily ridiculed by Sir Walter Scott,

in his character of Sir Piercie Shafton, in the "*Monastery*," was nevertheless an Author of distinguished merit; and in his "*Cupid and Campaspe*," especially, we find touches of genuine Poetry, and unsophisticated nature. "*The Spanish Tragedy, or, Hieronimo is mad again*," by Thomas Kyd, is valuable for one Scene only, which is supposed to have been interpolated by a later hand, and has been attributed by various commentators to Jonson, to Webster, and to Shakspeare. It is not unworthy of either of those writers; but is most probably the property of the first, to whom, as has been ascertained by a discovery made a few years since at Dulwich College, two sundry payments were made by the Theatre, for additions to this Tragedy. *Hieronimo*, whose son has been murdered, goes distracted, and wishes a Painter to represent the fatal catastrophe upon canvas. He finds that the Artist is suffering under a bereavement similar to his own; and there is something powerfully affecting in the following dialogue:—

" *The PAINTER enters.*

Paint. God bless you, Sir!

Hieron. Wherefore? why, thou scornful villain!
How, where, or by what means should I be blest?

Isab. What would you have, good fellow?

Paint. Justice, madam.

Hieron. Oh ! ambitious fellow, would'st thou have that
That lives not in the world ?

Why all the undelved mines cannot buy
An ounce of justice ; 'tis a jewel so inestimable.
I tell thee, God has engross'd all justice in his hand,
And there is none but what comes from him.

Paint. Oh ! then I see that God must right me for my murder'd son !

Hieron. How ! was thy son murder'd ?

Paint. Ay, Sir ; no man did hold a son so dear.

Hieron. What ! not as thine ? That's a lie
As massy as the earth ! I had a Son,
Whose least unvalued hair did weigh
A thousand of thy Son's ! and he was murder'd !

Paint. Alas ! Sir, I had no more but he.

Hieron. Nor I, nor I ; but this same one of mine
Was worth a legion."

The nature and simplicity of this Scene is worth all the ambitious imagery, and rhetorical ornaments which modern Authors lavish upon their Dramas. It reminds us of that fine burst of natural passion of *Lear*,—

" *Lear.* Did'st thou give all to thy daughters ?

Kent. He hath no daughters, Sir.

Lear. Death, traitor ! nothing could have reduced nature
To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters."

But by far the mightiest Dramatic Genius who preceded Shakspeare, was Christopher Marlowe.

This extraordinary Author is an anomaly in Literature. With innumerable faults, and those of the worst kind, frequently displaying turgidity and bombast in his Tragic scenes, and buffoonery and grossness in his Comic ones, he nevertheless evinces in many places, not only powerful genius, but severe taste, and fastidious judgment. Nothing can be worse than "*Lust's Dominion*," and "*The Mighty Tamburlaine*;" and nothing can be finer than many parts of "*Edward the Second*," and "*Doctor Faustus*." Mr. Charles Lamb says, truly, that the former Tragedy furnished hints which Shakspeare scarcely improved in his "*Richard the Second*." We may say the same thing of the latter, with reference to Goethe, and his "*Faust*." The Tragedy of Goethe is more connected, and better sustained throughout, than that of Marlowe. It is not chargeable with the same inequalities, and keeps up the character of the Hero, as a Soul lost by the thirst after knowledge, instead of representing him, as the English Author too often does, in the light of a vulgar conjurer indulging in tricks of legerdemain; though we doubt whether there is any thing in the German Play, which approaches the sublimity and awfulness of the last scene in "*Doctor Faustus*."

At length the great Literary era of Elizabeth

dawned upon Britain ; and in the Dramatic annals of the Nation, we no longer find a few stars faintly twinkling amidst the surrounding darkness, but a magnificent constellation, composed of Shakspeare, Beaumont, Fletcher, Jonson, Ford, Webster, Massinger, Rowley, Chapman, Middleton, Dekker, Tourneur, Shirley, and others, brightening the whole Literature hemisphere with a blaze of glory. In addition to these names, which belong almost exclusively to Dramatic Literature, we may enumerate those of Spenser, Hall, Brown, Drummond, Sidney, and Raleigh, in other branches of Poetry. The period during which these illustrious men flourished has been distinguished by the name of Elizabeth, although it is only to the latter part of her reign, and to those of her two immediate successors, that most of them properly belong.

The merits of Shakspeare are now so well, and so generally appreciated, that it can scarcely be necessary to enter into any detail of them. It is, however, extraordinary, that in a Nation which has exulted so much in his genius, and has professed to derive so much of it's Literary glory from his fame, his merits should, until very recently, have been so imperfectly known. Steele, in one of the "*Tatlers*," bestows some very high encomiums upon a justly celebrated passage in

“*Macbeth*,” and then gives a miserably erroneous quotation, from some garbled Stage Edition, then extant.

The opinion which prevailed until within the last half century, that Shakspeare had failed in his delineation of Female Character, is also a striking and decisive proof of the general ignorance respecting the real merits of our immortal Bard. On the Stage, and in quotations, he was well known, but it is only very recently, that Readers have taken the trouble to explore this vast mine of intellectual lore for themselves; and though we now rank those beautiful pictures, both serious and comic, which the Poet has drawn in *Lady Macbeth*, *Constance*, *Juliet*, *Imogen*, *Cleopatra*, *Rosalind*, and *Beatrice*, as amongst the happiest efforts of his Genius, yet many years have not gone by, since it was a popular opinion, that his mind was of too masculine a structure to excel in pictures of Female grace and loveliness; and that it was only in his Male characters, that his wonderful genius developed itself. This opinion, too, was not confined to the vulgar and uninformed. Men of taste and education were content to take up the current opinion, without examining it's truth; and we accordingly find that even Collins, whose genius in some particulars discovered a

strong affinity to that of Shakspeare himself, in his "*Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer*," after eulogizing the Female Characters of Fletcher, adds,—

" But stronger Shakspeare felt for Man alone."

In truth, Shakspeare's Females are creations of a very different stamp from those which have been immediately popular in histrionic records. Their sorrows are not obstreperous and theatrical, but,—

" The still sad music of Humanity,"—

as Wordsworth hath finely phrased it,—is heard throughout all their history. The Poet's description of a Lover,—

" All made of passion, and all made of wishes ;
All adoration, duty, and obedience ;
All humbleness, all patience, and impatience ;
All purity, all trial, all observance ;"

will apply as well to his delineations of Woman. Sighs, tears, passion, trial, and humility, are the component parts of her character ; and however the Dramatic Writer may endeavour to " elevate and surprise," by pursuing a different course, these

are the materials with which Nature will furnish him ; and, if he really wish to follow her, “ to this complexion he must come at last.” Shakspeare reconciled Poetry and Nature ; he borrowed her wildest wing of Romance, and yet stooped to the severest discipline of Truth ; he revelled in the impossible, without violating the probable ; he preserved the unity of character, while he spurned the unities of time, place, and action ; and combined propriety, nature, truth, and feeling, with wildness, extravagance, and an unbounded license of Imagination.

The general cast of character in Shakspeare’s Females is tenderness and pathos ; but this is not because our Author was unable to depict Woman in her more dignified and commanding, though less ordinary, attitude. Thus, there is nothing more majestic, and, we may say, awful, on the Stage, than *Katharine* defending herself against the malice and hypocrisy of *Henry* ; and nothing more fearful and appalling than the whole character of *Lady Macbeth*, from the first Scene in which her ambition is awakened, by the perusal of her Husband’s letter, to the last, in which we discover it’s bitter fruits, in treason, murder, and insanity. Then there is the *Lady Constance*, a Woman, a Mother, and a Princess ; seen in all the fearful

vicissitudes of human life ; hoping, exulting, blessing, fearing, weeping, despairing, and, at last, dying. Shall we add the *Weird Sisters*, those “foul anomalies,” in whom all that is malignant and base in the female character is exaggerated to an unearthly stature, and those gentler beings, such as *Juliet* and *Desdemona*, who, with frailties and imperfections which ally them to earth, yet approximate to those superior and benevolent spirits, of whom we have such an exquisite picture in *Ariel*, and the *Fairies* in the “*Midsummer Night’s Dream*?” *Cleopatra*, *Volumnia*, and *Isabella*, are further instances of Shakspeare’s power of exhibiting the loftier and stronger traits of the Female character. His picture of the fascinating Egyptian Queen is, indeed, a masterpiece. In perusing it, we feel no longer astonished that crowns and empires were sacrificed for her. “The soft Triumvir’s fault” is easily “forgiven.” We no longer wonder at, we scarcely pity him, so splendid is the prize for which he is content to—

“ Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch
Of the ranged empire fall !”

The Reader—for this is not on the list of acting-plays,—is himself caught in the golden snare.

The Play is occupied with battles and treaties, with wars and commotions, with the quarrels of Monarchs, and the destinies of the world, yet all are forgotten when *Cleopatra* is on the Scene. We have many and splendid descriptions of her personal charms, but it is her mind, the strength of her passion, the fervour and fury of her love, the bitterness of her hatred, and the desperation of her death, which take so strong a hold upon the imagination. We follow her, admire her, sympathize with her, through all, and when the Asp has done it's fatal work, who does not exclaim with *Charmion*?—

“ Now boast thee, Death ! in thy possession lies
A lass unparallel'd ! ”

How different a being from this, is the ill-fated fair who slumbers in “ the tomb of the Capulets.” She is all gentleness and mildness, all hidden passion, and silent suffering; but her love is as ardent, her sorrows are as overwhelming, and her death as melancholy. “ The gentle lady wedded to the Moor ” is another sweet, still picture, which we contemplate with admiration, until Death drops his curtain over it. *Imogen* and *Miranda*, *Perdita* and *Ophelia*, *Cordelia*, *Helen*, and *Viola*,

need only be mentioned to recal to the mind the most fascinating pictures of female character which have ever been delineated. The last is a mere sketch, but it is a most charming one; and it's best description is that exquisite paraphrase, in which the character is so beautifully summed up:—

“ She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek. She pined in thought,
And with a green and yellow melancholy,
She sat, like Patience on a monument,
Smiling at Grief.”

Of Shakspeare's Comic Female Characters, it will be sufficient to adduce two, *Rosalind* and *Beatrice*. What a fascinating creature is the first! what an admirable compound of wit, gaiety, and good humour! blended, at the same time, with deep and strong passion, with courage and resolution; with unshaken affection to her Father, and constant and fervent love for *Orlando*. How extraordinary and romantic is this character, if we contemplate it in the abstract, yet how beautiful and true to Nature, if we examine it in all it's details. *Beatrice* is a character of a very different stamp from *Rosalind*, although resembling her in some particulars. She has all her wit; but, it must be

confessed, without her good humour. Her arrows are not merely piercing, but poisoned. *Rosalind's* is cheerful raillery, *Beatrice's*, satirical bitterness; *Rosalind* is not only afraid to strike, but unwilling to wound: *Beatrice* is, at least, careless of the effect of her wit, if she can but find an opportunity to utter it. But Shakspeare has no heartless characters in his Dramas, he has no mere "intellectual gladiators," as Dr. Johnson has well styled the Actors in the witty scenes of Congreve. *Beatrice* has strong and easily excited feelings. Love is called into action by the stratagem of the garden scene; and rage, indignation, and revenge, by the slanders cast upon her cousin. We have heard the character called inconsistent, but what is human nature but a tissue of inconsistencies? or rather, are not our hopes, fears, affections, and passions, linked together by a thread so fine, that only the gifted eye of such a Poet as Shakspeare can discover it? The changes of purpose and passion, as developed by him in the mind of *Beatrice* are anything but inconsistencies; abrupt and surprising they certainly are, but they are accounted for by motives of extraordinary weight, and feelings of singular susceptibility.

Before I close this subject, however, I would say a few words upon the neglected Play of

“ *Pericles* ;” first, because it contains a very sweet and interesting Female character,—that of *Marina*, the heroine,—and, secondly, because it’s authenticity has been questioned by the commentators. This Drama has always clearly appeared to me to be a production of Shakspeare, although certainly a production of his earlier years. The inconsistency and confusion of the plot, and the inartificial manner in which many of the events are brought about, prove it to be the work of a novice in the art; but the delicate touches of Nature, the beautiful delineations of character, the sweet flow of it’s verse, and the rich vein of poetry and imagination, which pervade the whole, betray the master’s hand, and entitle it, in my opinion, to a high rank among the works of Shakspeare. How fine, for instance, is the following soliloquy of *Pericles*, on a Ship at sea :—

“ Thou God of the great vast! rebuke these surges
Which wash both Heaven and Hell; and Thou, that hast
Upon the Winds command, bind them in brass,
Having call’d them from the deep! Oh! still thy deaf’ning,
Thy dreadful thunders! gently quench thy nimble,
Sulphureous flashes! Thou storm! thou, venomously,
Wilt thou spit all thyself? The seaman’s whistle
Is as a whisper in the ears of death,
Unheard.”

The description of the recovery of *Thaisa* from a state of suspended animation, is also most powerfully eloquent:—

“ Nature awakes ; a warmth
Breathes out of her ; she hath not been entranced
Above five hours. See how she ’gins to blow
Into life’s flower again !—She is alive ; behold,
Her eyelids, cases to those heavenly jewels
Which Pericles hath lost,
Begin to part their fringes of bright gold,
The diamonds of a most praised water
Appear to make the world twice rich.”

Marina, the daughter of *Pericles*, is born at sea, during a storm ; and our Author, in this Drama, as in the “ *Winter’s Tale*,” leaps over the intervening years, and shews her, in the fourth Act, “ on the eve of womanhood ;” where her first speech, on the death of her Nurse, is sweetly plaintive and poetical :—

“ No, no ; I will rob Tellus of her weed
To strew thy grave with flowers ! the yellows, blues,
The purple violets, and marygolds,
Shall as a chaplet hang upon thy grave,
While Summer-days do last. Ah me ! poor maid,
Born in a tempest, when my mother died,
This world to me is like a lasting storm,
Whirring me from my friends.”

In the course of the Play, *Marina* undergoes a variety of adventures, in all of which the mingled gentleness and dignity of her character is most admirably developed. The interview with her Father, in the fifth Act, is, indeed, one of the most powerful and affecting passages in the whole range of the British Drama; and I earnestly recommend all who are unacquainted with this Play to peruse it immediately, and judge for themselves, whether the mighty hand of Shakspeare be not visible throughout.

The preceding observations have, I hope, sufficiently shewn, not only the great power and skill of Shakspeare in his delineation of Females, but also that he exhibits as great resources, and as much fertility of genius in them, as in any of the other characters of his Dramas. The Champions who have hitherto broken a lance in favour of this cause, have usually confined their observations to the gracefulness and gentleness of *Juliet*, and *Imogen*, and *Desdemona*, but when we remember that the same pencil has painted so many, and such diametrically opposite characters, then I say, that if Shakspeare had never given us a single masculine portrait, still he would have shewn a powerful and original genius, which, in fecundity and versatility, as well as in elegance and grace-

fulness, has never yet been equalled, and will certainly never be surpassed.

In addition to the neglect of his Female characters, another vulgar estimate of the powers of Shakspeare, was founded upon the idea, that he was a great, but irregular genius, flourishing in a barbarous age, which was unenlightened, excepting by the splendour which he himself threw around it; and which even over his own "mounting Spirit" has cast it's gothic chains, and prevented it from reaching it's natural elevation. We now feel and know, that his judgment was as profound, as his genius was magnificent; that his skill in constructing his plots, and developing his characters, was not surpassed even by the splendour of his imagination, and the richness of his diction; and that, so far from shining a solitary star in the midst of Cimmerian blackness, he was surrounded by inferior, but still resplendent orbs, each of which only waited the setting of his surpassing brightness, to shine itself the Lord of the ascendant.

The fame which this extraordinary man has acquired, and which seems, to use a simile of Schlegel's, "to gather strength, like an Alpine avalanche, at every period of it's descent," is not the least remarkable circumstance connected with

our subject. It is not simply from the approving judgments, or the delighted fancies, of his partial readers, that Shakspeare derives his reputation and his power. His writings “come home,” as Lord Bacon has expressed it, “to men’s business and bosoms.” They teach us something of ourselves, and “of the stuff we’re made of.” Like his own *Hamlet*,—

“ They set us up a glass,
Where we may see the inmost parts of us.”

Hence, it is not merely approval, or even delight, which is excited by his powers; it is “an appetite, a feeling, and a love.” No Poet was ever so *passionately* admired; because none ever so completely developed the springs of Human nature, and thus rendered himself intelligible, and interesting to all. Hence too, the universality, and the perpetuity of his fame. He has painted all the modes and qualities of human conditions; all the shades and peculiarities of human character. Wherever, therefore, those characters, and those conditions exist, the works of Shakspeare can never become foreign, or obsolete. “The stream of Time, which is continually washing the disso-

luble fabrics of other Poets, passes without injury by the adamant of Shakspeare."

" Age cannot wither him, nor custom stale
His infinite variety."

The surface of life may be altered, but the tide of human feelings and passions will continue its unalterable course beneath it. Reputation built upon the ephemeral taste and fancies of a day, will vanish with the causes which produced it; but Shakspeare's, with its altar in the heart of man, is extensive as the world, and imperishable as humanity. The fame of Shakspeare has naturally suggested an enquiry as to the peculiar powers of that mind, which could acquire such an influence over the minds of others. What was the talisman that worked these wonders? Wherein did he surpass that world which has paid him such extraordinary honours? The answers to these enquiries have been as various as the tastes and opinions of readers. His wit, his imagination, his sublimity, have all been suggested as the distinguished characteristics of his mind; but the arguments which have been advanced in support of these positions have proved only, that in these particulars he

excelled the rest of the world. In order to answer this enquiry satisfactorily, we must also shew wherein he excelled himself. The most extraordinary supposition, however, that we have heard started on this point, is that he painted with truth and fidelity, because he divested himself of the common passions and feelings of human nature; and stood aloof from the ordinary concerns of mankind, in order to describe with greater correctness and impartiality.

“ Cold lookers-on, they say,
Can better judge than those who play;”

and the remark would apply to Shakspeare, if, indeed, he merely *described*; if the warm and glowing pictures which he exhibits could have been the effects of cold calculation, and unimpassioned observations. If I might hazard an opinion, I should say that the master-feeling in the mind of Shakspeare, and that which has enabled him to subjugate the hearts of all mankind, was Sympathy; for it has been well said, that “ when words come from one heart, they cannot fail to reach another.” Shakspeare’s feelings, there can be no doubt, were of the finest and acutest order. He is styled by his contemporaries “ sweet Shakspeare,” and “ gentle Shakspeare,” as if to denote the susceptibility of

his disposition, and his amiable manners. He painted correctly, because he felt strongly: and it seems to me impossible to account, in any other way, for his excellence in both provinces of the Dramatic art. It is well known that spirits remarkable for their mirth and hilarity, are most susceptible of tender and mournful passions; and it has been observed that the English, as a nation, are equally famous for wit, and for melancholy. It is a common observation, that mirth begets mirth; and on the other hand an old English Poet, Drayton, has beautifully said, that,—

“Tears,
Elixir-like, turn all to tears they touch.”

The feelings of Shakspeare's mind produced correspondent feelings in the minds of others; like a precious stone, which casts it's brilliant hues over every object that it approaches.

But whatever may have been the strongest marked feature in the mind of our Author, we are convinced that the theory which refers his astonishing fame to the possession of any one peculiar quality, is erroneous. His distinguishing characteristic is the union of many excellencies: each of which he possessed in a degree unequalled by any

other Poet. Shakspeare will be found pre-eminent, if we consider his sublimity, his pathos, his imagination, his wit, or his humour; his union in his own person of the highest Tragic and Comic excellence, and his knowledge of Nature, animate, inanimate, and human. To excel in any one of these particulars would form a great Poet; to unite two, or three of them, is a lot too lofty even for the ambition of highly favoured mortals; but to combine all, as Shakspeare has done, in one tremendous intellect, is, indeed,—

“ To get the start of the majestic World,
And bear the palm alone !”

The genius of Shakspeare cannot be illustrated by a reference to that of any other Poet; for, with whom is he to be compared? Like his own *Richard*,—

“ He has no brother, is like no brother,
He is himself alone !”

Geniuses of the most colossal dimensions become dwarfed by his side. Like Titan, he is a Giant among giants. Like him too, he piles up his magnificent thoughts, Olympus high; he grasps the

lightnings of creative Jove ; and speaks the words that call Spirits, and Mortals, and Worlds, into existence. He has faults, doubtless; faults which it is not my purpose either to extenuate, or to deny, but the Critic who thinks that such faults are of much weight, when opposed to his genius, would be likely to condemn the Apollo Belvidere, for a stain upon the pedestal. The very brightness of transcendent excellence renders it's faults and imperfections but the more visible; nothing appears faultless but mediocrity. The Moon and the Stars shine with unsullied brightness; the Sun alone exhibits spots upon his disk !

It is, however, truly difficult to say anything on the subject of Shakspeare, which has not been said before. So numerous, so ardent, and so discriminative, have been his admirers, that almost every latent beauty seems to have been brought to light, and every once-obscure passage surrounded by a blaze of illustration. There is, indeed, but one class of characters which he has delineated with consummate power and excellence, which has not, I think, yet attracted that critical notice which it merits, I mean the party-coloured Fool, or Jester, whose gibes and jeers were wont to set the tables of our ancestors in a roar. This character is now no longer to be met with in the halls of the

great and opulent. The glories of the motley coat have passed away. A few faint vestiges of it are preserved at Wakes, and Village festivals, in the remote provinces of the island; and some of it's honours are yet divided between the *Clown* and *Harlequin* of our modern Pantomime; but, alas! "how changed! how fallen!" Spirits of *Touchstone*, *Gobbo*, and *Pompey Bum!* do ye not sometimes wander from your Elysium, to mourn over the imbecile efforts of these degenerate times?

The sketches which Shakspeare has given us of this character, will sufficiently excuse our ancestors for the attachment which they evinced for it; for, if his portraits at all resemble the originals, they must have been very delightful personages indeed. As delineated by our Author, the character is a compound of infinite wit, with matchless effrontery; affecting Folly, making itself the butt of it's companions for their amusement, yet frequently turning the laugh upon themselves; generally escaping from the consequences of great Impudence, and not a little knavery, by the exercise of it's humorous talents; yet liable to be kicked and cudgelled, whensoever, and wheresoever, it was deemed expedient. These are the general outlines; but these, Shakspeare has diver-

sified with such varied and admirable power, that, many as are the Clowns introduced into his Plays, he has never repeated the same individual. Like Nature herself, who does not produce two blades of grass exactly similar, so Shakspeare makes the nicest discrimination between personages which approximate, and almost blend with each other. Even the *Ruffians* who are hired to murder the Infant Princes in "*Richard the Third*," and the *Servants* who are spreading the table for the banquet of the Volscian Lords in "*Coriolanus*," are all distinguished from each other, by the most minute, and delicate traits of character.

In Shakspeare's Clowns there is every variety which diversity of humour, talents, station, and disposition, can give to them. From the witless blundering *Costard*,—perhaps the lowest in the scale,—we ascend by regular gradations through the half-starved, conscientious *Launcelot Gobbo*,—"young master Launcelot,"—the merry chirping Clown in "*Twelfth Night*," and the bitter sarcastic *Fool* in "*King Lear*," up to that very Prince of Fools,—the Courtier, Lover, Philosopher, Scholar, Poet, Duellist;—the "unimitated, inimitable" *Touchstone*. The Clowns of Shakspeare, also, are not extraneous characters, introduced, like those in the Plays of Marston, Beau-

mont and Fletcher, and some others, merely for the purpose of shewing off their own humour. They are active personages of the Drama, and often contribute materially to the business of the Scene. On the mistakes of *Costard*, hinges the whole Plot of "*Love's Labour Lost*," and *Launcelot Gobbo* is a principal agent in the escape of *Jessica*, in the "*Merchant of Venice*." The dialogues between *Launce* and *Speed* in the "*Two Gentlemen of Verona*," and between the *Dromios* in the "*Comedy of Errors*," are, on this very account alone, sufficient to prove that those Plays are not *wholly* Shakspeare's. That the marks of his powerful pencil may be sometimes recognised, cannot be denied; but, that the composition of the entire picture is his, is an opinion which not all the authorities in the world shall persuade me to adopt: this feeling "fire cannot burn out of me; I will die with it at the stake!" The character of the *Fool* in "*Lear*," is one of the most effective even in that wonderful Drama, by the way in which it sets off, and relieves that of the *King*; and there cannot be a more striking proof of the incapacity of Managers, and of the menders of Shakspeare, than it's omission in the acted Play.

I have already expressed my attachment to

Touchstone ; and I hope that general opinion will coincide with me. I would say, as *Jacques* said to the *Duke*,—" I pray you, like this Fool !" He is indeed the very paragon of his tribe :—" One that hath been a Courtier ; and says, if Ladies be but young and fair, they have the gift to know it ; and in his brain, which is as dry as the remainder biscuit, after a voyage, he hath strange places crammed with observation, the which he vents in mangled forms."

Was there ever such matter in Folly ? was there ever, as *Jacques* calls him, such " a material fool ?" Are all the wise treatises which were ever written on the laws of Honour, comparable to his dissertation on the seven causes ? Or, is there any one who will dispute his claim to a Courtier's rank, after having heard him plead his own cause ? " I have trod a measure ; I have flattered a lady ; I have been politic with my friend ; smooth with mine enemy ; I have undone three tailors ! I have had four quarrels, and like to have fought one !" Then, how richly is his mind furnished ! *Launcelot Gobbo* is an erudite man in his way, but he is nothing to *Touchstone*. The former, it is true, talks of " the Fates and Destinies, and such odd sayings ; the Sisters three, and such branches of learning : " but *Touchstone*, moralising on the

time, and playing the logician with the *Shepherd*, till he proves to his hearer's own satisfaction, that he is incontestibly damned; and reading his lectures on Poetry to *Audrey*; and recounting his amours with *Jane Smile*; is entirely matchless and irresistible; and compels us to reiterate the exclamation of *Jacques*,—

“ Oh noble Fool !

A worthy fool ! Motley's the only wear ! ”

Shakspeare in this Play has very artfully and beautifully shewn, how two characters, which to the casual observer appear diametrically opposed, may have latent resemblances; and may feel themselves irresistibly drawn together, by some inexplicable link, so fine as to be invisible, and yet so strong, as to form an instant bond of union. Of all the characters in this Drama, those of *Jacques* and the *Clown* would seem to stand at the farthest distance from each other; but on their first interview, the former becomes attached to *Touchstone*; is ambitious of a motley coat, and is wrapt in admiration that, “ Fools should be so deep contemplative.” Yet *Jacques* is a gentleman of polished mind and manners; and *Touchstone* is a low domestic. One is shy and reserved; the other

loquacious and fond of society. One is of a mind sensitive and irritable, even to disease ; the other, the common butt at which it is the chartered privilege of all to level their malice, or their wit. If, however, we examine these characters more closely, we shall find amidst all their contrarieties, many traits of resemblance. Both are men of strong sense and extensive observation ; both have a quick talent for detecting the ridiculous ; but in the nervous temperament of *Jacques*, this has produced misanthropy, and a sullen abjuration of the world ; while in the heartier humour of *Touchstone*, it has only added to his sources of enjoyment, by enabling him to laugh more frequently at the follies of mankind. Both have been used to the Court ; and, although in very different stations, have enjoyed equal opportunities of observing the world, and it is clear that the good-humoured Fool has arrived at much the same conclusion in his estimate of mankind, as the splenetic Recluse. They have the same disposition to depreciate whatever is the admiration, or the occupation of others. *Jacques* adds a burlesque stanza to the Song of *Amiens*, and *Touchstone* produces a ludicrous parody on *Orlando's* verses : *Jacques* swears that the Duke, because he kills venison, is a greater Usurper than his brother ; and *Touchstone*, because the *Shep-*

herd gets his living by the increase of his flock, tells him that he lives by the intrigues of cattle, and the wickedness of bell-wethers.

I find that by beginning with *Touchstone*, I have been guilty of a sad anti-climax. To descend with Shakspeare is, however, a loftier occupation than to rise with other writers. Indeed, I am not sure, when I reconsider the matter, that I have not committed an injustice in giving any of the motley tribe precedence of the *Fool* in "*Lear*." This is a Tragic character; not in itself, but in the way in which it sets off, and heightens the picture which is presented of the misery of the King. It is like the dark lights of Rembrandt; a gleam, a ray, showing, but not dispelling, the blackness which surrounds it. The following Scene is an example:

" *Fool*. Can'st tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

Lear. Why?

Fool. Why, to put his head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

Lear. I will forget my nature.—So kind a father! Be my horses ready?

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven Stars are seven, is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight?

Fool. Yes, indeed. Thou would'st make a good Fool.

Lear. To take it again perforce! Monster ingratitude!

Fool. If thou wert my fool, nuncle, I'd have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How's that?

Fool. Thou should'st not have been old before thou had'st been wise.

Lear. Oh! let me not be mad! not mad, sweet Heaven! Keep me in temper, I would not be mad."

How subtle and fine was Shakspeare's knowledge of the human mind! How beautifully has he, in the three characters of *Lear*, *Edgar*, and the *Fool*, discriminated between the real insanity of the first, the assumed madness of the second, and the official buffoonery of the third. *Lear's* thoughts are ever dwelling on his daughters; his mind is a desert, and that one idea, like the Banana tree, fixes in it it's thousand roots, to the exclusion of all others. How different is this from the wild farrago of *Mad Tom*, who is obliged to talk an unintelligible gibberish, for the purpose of supporting his assumed part; through which his real character is every now and then seen, and discovers itself in a sympathy for the unhappy King. The conversation of the *Fool*, on the contrary, is composed of scraps of old Songs and sayings, which he applies with bitter mirthfulness to the situation of his master. It is also worthy of notice, among those minute beauties which are so often passed over without com-

ment, that, as *Lear's* misery deepens and increases, the witticisms of the *Fool* become less frequent; and, unable any longer to indulge in his jests, he shows his sympathy by his silence. This is finely imagined, and worth all the eloquent sorrow that an ordinary Play-wright would have indited. In the early part of the Tragedy, the *Fool* is as frequent an interlocutor as *Lear* himself; but in that powerfully pathetic scene, in which the distracted King imagines, that his daughters are being arraigned before him for their crimes, he indulges in only one sorry jest, at the beginning, and is afterwards mute; while, *Edgar* also, unable any longer to play the Maniac, exclaims:—

“ My tears begin to take his part so much,
They'll mar my counterfeiting.”

It is thus that Genius effects it's noblest triumphs, by identifying it's actors with it's auditors.

I have left myself very little space for discussing the merits of the remaining worthies of this class. The *Clown* in “*Twelfth Night*” should occupy a very considerable place in our esteem. He has less Poetry about his character than either of those of whom we have been speaking, but he is more of a bon vivant, and a man amongst men. Both

Touchstone, and the *Fool* in "*Lear*," seem in some measure to stand aloof from the other personages, and to have but few feelings and objects in common with them. They are "among them, but not of them." But the *Clown* in the Play beforeus, can sing a good Song, can take his share of a stoop of wine; can join in the laugh which he has not raised, and assist in the plot which others have projected. There is "a laughing devil in the sneer" of *Lear's Fool*, and even *Touchstone* "smiles in bitterness," but this jovial *Clown* has much more of mere flesh and blood in him: he approximates nearer to *Falstaff* than his brethren do. There seems to be nothing of pure malevolence in his wit. Even his share in the conspiracy against *Malvolio*, is undertaken simply for the love of laughter, and without any desire to give real pain to the fantastical Steward. Nay, he at length entertains sympathy for his persecutions, and endeavours to use his good offices in his favour. His joining in the bitter laugh, and ironical compliments of his companions, when impelled to it by the absurdities of *Malvolio*, is the effect of long habit, and a naturally quick discernment of the ridiculous; and he no more evinces thereby a want of sympathy and good nature, than did Hogarth when he used

his pencil to depict the ludicrous expression of the boy's countenance whose head was broken at the Tavern. He is a more inveterate punster than any of his tribe. Words with him are the most ductile and pliable of all things; he can twist them into any shape, and extort from them almost any meaning; he is a very despot over the English language; he pursues with unconquerable pertinacity the most innocent word in the vocabulary, and never parts with it till he has triumphed over it's simplicity: he is, indeed, as he describes himself, "not his mistress's fool, but her corrupter of words."

These are the flower of the Clownish army; but there are numerous, although inferior, worthies, behind. There is *Pompey the Great*, in "*Measure for Measure*;" and *Costard*, who finds out, that remuneration is the Latin word for three farthings; and *Launcelot Gobbo* who was the subject of that memorable warfare between the fiend and his conscience; and the *Shepherd's Son*, in the "*Winter's Tale*," the new made gentleman, or rather, "the gentleman born before his father." On the merits of these I have not time to descant: if not worthy to be compared with their brethren, whom I have noticed more at length, they are, nevertheless, fine creations in their way. They

are imbued with the genius of Shakspeare: his "image and superscription" is on them. There is, however, this distinction between them and the others, that they seem rather to be qualified for the motley-coated office, than to have ever filled that station; and *Costard*, and the *Shepherd's Son*, are not gratuitous, but involuntary blunderers. *Pompey Bum*, however, is really a great man. His narration of the amours of *Master Froth* and *Mistress Elbow*, is irresistibly comic; and the arguments by which he endeavours to convince *Barnardine* of the benefits of being hanged, are almost worthy of *Touchstone*, himself.

Such was England's, Nature's Shakspeare:—

" Each change of many-colour'd life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new :
Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
And panting Time toil'd after him in vain !"

Shakspeare's contemporaries have, since the publication of Mr. Lambe's *Specimens*, and the Critical labours of Seward, Whalley, Colman, Weber, and Gifford, begun to attract that portion of public attention to which they are entitled. Jonson's character has also been successfully vindicated, by the last named gentleman, against the charge

of malignity and envy of Shakspeare ; but I do not think that his Poetical merits are yet properly appreciated. I cannot consent that the palm of humour alone shall be given to him ; while, in wit, feeling, pathos, and Poetical diction, he is to be sunk fathoms below Fletcher and Massinger. In the last particular, I think that he excels them both, and, indeed, all his contemporaries, excepting Shakspeare.

The strength of Jonson's style is undoubted, and therefore, his Critics have chosen to deny him the merits of elegance and gracefulness. The fact is, that in his Tragedies, and the metrical parts of his Comedies, his versification is peculiarly smooth and flowing ; and the Songs, and other Lyrical pieces, which he has sprinkled over his Dramas, are exquisitely elegant, and elaborated to the highest degree of polish. The celebrated Poems of " Drink to me only with thine eyes," and " Still to be neat, still to be drest," sufficiently prove this assertion. I have already, in a former Lecture, given one of Jonson's Canzonets, but I cannot refrain from also quoting the following beautiful Madrigal :—

" Do but look on her eyes, they do light
All that Love's world compriseth ;

Do but look on her hair, it is bright
 As Love's star when it riseth !
 Do but mark her forehead, smother
 Than words that soothe her !
 And from her arch'd brow such a grace
 Sheds itself through the face,
 As alone there triumphs to the life,
 All the gain, all the good, of the elements' strife.

Have you seen but a bright lily grow
 Before rude hands have touch'd it?
 Have you mark'd but the fall of the snow
 Before the soil hath smutch'd it?
 Have you felt the wool of the beaver?
 Or the swan's down, ever?
 Or have smelt o' the bud o' the briar?
 Or the nard i' the fire?
 Or have tasted the bag o' the bee,
 Oh ! so white ! Oh ! so soft ! Oh ! so sweet is she !”

“ *Catiline, his Conspiracy,*” is a fine Tragedy, full of passionate and animated action ; but, at the same time, displaying eloquent dialogue, powerful description, and a sweet, yet vigorous versification ; while the Characters are drawn, that of *Catiline* especially, with Shakspearean force and truth. The piece opens with the denunciation of *Sylla's Ghost* ; after which *Catiline* enters, brooding over his intended treason. The succeeding Scene is very artfully contrived to let us into the characters of the leading Conspirators, by the account

which *Catiline* gives of them to *Aurelia*; and these characters are preserved, and acted up to, with uncommon skill throughout the whole Drama. The Imprecation pronounced by *Catiline* is fine, and contains a brief summary of his purpose and character:—

“ It is decreed ! Nor shall thy fate, Oh Rome !
Resist my vow. Though hills were set on hills,
And seas met seas, to guard thee, I would through :
I'd plough up rocks, steep as the Alps, in dust ;
And lave the Tyrrhene waters into clouds,
But I would reach thy head, thy head, proud City !”

The description of the morning on which the chief Conspirators meet together, in the following Scene, is highly poetical; and, as it is remarked by Whalley, in strict accordance with the character of the speaker, *Lentulus*, who has been before described, as addicted to superstition, and a belief in omens. Jonson, like Shakspeare, does not indulge in extraneous description; every thing in both these great Authors is characteristic and dramatic; and, in the present instance, the mind is finely prepared for the fearfully interesting subject on which the characters are about to debate, by this powerful description:—

“ It is, methinks, a Morning full of Fate !
She riseth slowly, as her sullen car

Had all the weights of Sleep and Death hung at it.
She is not rosy finger'd, but swoll'n black!
Her face is like a water turn'd to blood,
And her sick head is bound about with clouds,
As if she threaten'd night ere noon of day!
It does not look, as it would have a hail,
Or health wish'd in it, as on other morns."

This, besides being short, and highly characteristic of the speaker, is connected with the business of the Play by the answer of *Cethegus*:—

" Why, all the fitter, Lentulus; our coming
Is not for salutation, we have business."

The art and subtlety of *Catiline's* character is also finely developed in this Scene; for though ambition is his ruling passion, the gratification of that passion depends upon his assuming the appearance of subserviency to his coadjutors; and he tells them,—

" I am shadow
To honour'd Lentulus and Cethegus here,
Who are the heirs of Mars."

And he is diligent in applauding, and coinciding with, all their suggestions. Afterwards, however, when his power is consummated, in his address to

his soldiers, and in his conduct during the battle, he takes a loftier tone, and acts “as one having authority.” This is human nature, and is beautifully and truly illustrated by the Poet. My limits will, of course, not allow me to adduce many specimens of the Dramatic skill of Jonson, which cannot be shewn by passages, or even by whole scenes. For this, I must refer to the Plays themselves: the present object being merely to prove that Jonson excelled in the lighter graces and elegancies of Poetry; that he could describe powerfully; and that his versification, instead of being rugged and lame, is constructed upon the truest principles of harmony. The following is animated and striking:—

“ Slaughter bestrid the streets, and stretch’d himself
To seem more huge; whilst to his stained thighs,
The gore he drew, flow’d up, and carried down
Whole heaps of limbs and bodies through his arch;
No age was spared, no sex, nay, no degree;
Not infants in the porch of life were free.
The sick, the old, that could not hope a day
Longer by Nature’s bounty, not let stay:
Virgins and widows, matrons, pregnant wives,
All died!—
The rugged Charon fainted,
And ask’d a navy, rather than a boat,
To ferry over the sad world that came.

The maws and dens of beasts could not receive
The bodies that those souls were frightened from ;
And e'en the graves were fill'd with men yet living,
Whose flight and fear had mix'd them with the dead."

The speech of *Petteius*, in the closing Scene of this fine Tragedy, is, perhaps, somewhat too long for our purpose ; but it is so full of noble and sublime images, gives so striking a picture of the chief personage of the Drama, and is so characteristic of the strength and beauty of the Author's style, that I cannot persuade myself to mutilate it:—

" The straits and needs of Catiline being such,
That he must fight with one of the two armies,
That then had near enclosed him, it pleased Fate
To make us th' object of his desperate choice,
Wherein the danger almost poised the honour :
And as he rose, the day grew black with him,
And Fate descended nearer to the earth,
As if she meant to hide the name of things
Under her wings, and make the world her quarry.
At this we roused, lest one small minute's stay
Had left it to be enquired, what Rome was ;
And, as we ought, arm'd in the confidence
Of our great cause, in form of battle stood :
Whilst Catiline came on, not with the face
Of any man, but of a public ruin :
His countenance was a civil war itself ;

And all his host had standing in their looks
The paleness of the death that was to come.
Yet cried they out like vultures, and urged on,
As though they would precipitate our fates :
Nor stay'd we longer for them ; but himself
Struck the first stroke, and with it fled a life ;
Which cut, it seem'd a narrow neck of land
Had broke between two mighty seas, and either
Flow'd into other ; for so did the slaughter ;
And whirl'd about, as when two violent tides
Meet, and not yield. The Furies stood on hills,
Circling the place, and trembling to see men
Do more than they ; whilst Piety left the field,
Grieved for that side, that in so bad a cause
They knew not what a crime their valour was.
The Sun stood still, and was behind a cloud
The battle made, seen sweating to drive up
His frightened horse, whom still the noise drove backward :
And now had fierce Enyo, like a flame,
Consumed all it could reach, and then itself ;
Had not the fortune of the Commonwealth
Come, Pallas-like, to every Roman thought,
Which Catiline seeing, and that now his troops
Cover'd that earth they'd fought on with their trunks,
Ambitious of great fame to crown his ill,
Collected all his fury, and ran in,
Arm'd with a glory high as his despair,
Into our battle, like a Lybian lion,
Upon his hunters ; scornful of our weapons,
Careless of wounds, plucking down lives about him,
Till he had circled in himself with death ;
Then he fell too, t' embrace it where it lay.
Minerva holding forth Medusa's head,

One of the giant brethren felt himself
Grow marble at the killing sight, and now,
Almost made stone, began t' enquire what flint,
What rock, it was that crept through all his limbs,
And ere he could think more, was that he fear'd;
So Catiline, at the sight of Rome, in us
Became his tomb: yet did his look retain
Some of his fierceness, and his hands still moved,
As if he labour'd yet to grasp the state
With those rebellious parts."

It would be difficult to find, in the whole range of English Poetry, a more magnificent description than this. The images are of a grandeur and sublimity correspondent with the subject, yet do they not, excepting perhaps that of the horses of the Sun being frightened at the noise of the battle, which is certainly somewhat too violent, degenerate into turgidity and bombast. It is, however, more Epic than Dramatic; and if the action had been represented, instead of being described, it would certainly have a more powerful effect upon the audience. For the honour of the Poet, we should add, that, much as he borrowed from the classics, this speech is original.

I have quoted so largely from "*Catiline*," that I have not any space for extracts from the rest of our Author's Dramas. The most poetical among them are "*Sejanus*," "*Cynthia's Revels*,"

the "*Poetaster*," and the fine fragments of the "*Sad Shepherd*" and "*Mortimer's Fall*."

But Jonson's fame rests principally upon his Comic powers. The great characteristic feature of his Comic genius is humour; an ingredient which seems to be entirely lost sight of in the composition of modern Comedies; the best, and most successful of which are remarkable only for wit. Brilliancy of dialogue, and smartness of repartee, excellent things as they are, are but poor substitutes for character, action, and human nature. In the composition of a perfect Comedy must be united wit and humour. Jonson had infinite humour, without much wit. Congreve, on the contrary, had wit in abundance, with very little, if any, humour. *Sir Joseph Wittol* and *Captain Bluff* may seem exceptions to this remark; but the former appears to me to be not humourous, but fantastic and unnatural; and the latter is a compound plagiarism from *Bessus* and the *two Swordsmen* of Beaumont and Fletcher. Congreve's most humourous Play is "*Love for Love*;" the most witty of Jonson's is, perhaps, "*Volpone, or, the Fox*;" which is the most perfect of all his works. The next in merit are "*Epicene, or, the Silent Woman*," the "*Alchemist*," and "*Every Man in his Humour*."

Jonson's style had few imitators, while that of his illustrious rival Shakspeare, formed the taste, and fixed the literary character, of his country. The best pupil of the Jonsonian School was Cartwright, of whom Jonson was very proud, and used to call him his son; and I give an extract from the "*Royal Slave*," to prove the truth of the old bard's assertion, "My Son Cartwright writes like a man:"—

"If they are Gods, Pity's a banquet to them.

Whene'er the innocent and virtuous

Do escape death, then is their festival :

Nectar ne'er flows more largely than when blood's

Not spilt that should be saved. D'ye think the smoke

Of human entrails is a steam that can

Delight the Deities? Whoe'er did burn

The Temple to the honour of the Architect?

Or break the tablet in the Painter's praise?

'Tis Mercy is the sacrifice they like."

I have entered thus largely upon the merits of Jonson, because I know, that, although much talked of, he is little read. He has the reputation of being a humourous, but rough and unpolished writer; exhibiting a rude strength in his Comic scenes, but without the feeling, elegance, or power, necessary for a Tragic, or Poetical Author. How true such opinions are, my quotations have suffi-

ciently shewn ; and for the number and length of those quotations, I need make no apology ; for they are, indeed,

“ No weak efforts of a modern pen,
But the strong touches of immortal Ben.”

LECTURE THE FOURTH.

DRAMATIC POETRY CONTINUED.

Beaumont and Fletcher:—Massinger:—Ford:—Webster:—
Effects of the Civil War upon Dramatic Literature:—
Milton, Dryden, Otway, Lee, Rowe, and Young:—
Brilliancy and Licentiousness of the new School of
Comedy:—Congreve, Farquhar, and Vanbrugh:—Jeremy
Collier:—Sentimental Comedy:—Sir Richard Steele:—
Goldsmith:—Cumberland:—The German School:—
Sheridan:—Present State of the Drama.

MY last Lecture attempted a Critical Review of the splendid Dramatic talents of Shakspeare, and Jonson; I now proceed to notice some of their gifted Contemporaries. Beaumont and Fletcher have given birth to many admirable scenes of wit and humour; and much lofty, eloquent, and affecting Poetry. Their powers,—I speak of them *jointly*, for all the attempts to distinguish their productions have ended in nothing but vain conjecture,—their powers were of a very high order; not, however, as some of their admirers assert, approachable to that of Shakspeare. They skimmed

the surface of life, and painted some of the lighter feelings and passions, with much ability: but they could not sound the depths of human nature like Shakspeare. When they venture into the higher regions of passion, they shew great fancy and elegance, but nothing more. The madness of the *Gaoler's daughter*, in that part of the "*Two Noble Kinsmen*," which is ascribed to Fletcher, is prettily managed; but compare it for a moment with *Ophelia*, or *Lear*,—the comparison with the latter has been challenged,—and how infinite is the disproportion: the first is not without the graces of Poetry, but the latter are compounded of the elements of human nature. There is, however, great beauty in the following passage from the "*Queen of Corinth*:"—

“ Wherefore sits

My Phoebe shadow'd in a sable cloud ?

Those pearly drops which thou lett'st fall like beads,

Numbering on them thy vestal orisons,

Alas ! are spent in vain ; I love thee still.

In midst of all these showers thou sweetlier scent'st

Like a green meadow on an April day,

In which the Sun and west wind play together,

Striving to catch and drink the pearly drops.”

Their use of imagery drawn from external na-

ture, is in general peculiarly happy: the passage which I have just quoted is an instance of this, and that which follows is still more striking:—

“ 1. Of all the Flowers, methinks the Rose is best.

2. Why, gentle Madam ?

1. It is the very emblem of a maid ;

For when the west wind courts her gently,

How modestly she blows, and paints the Sun

With her chaste blushes ! When the north wind comes
near her,

Rude and impatient, then, like Chastity,

She locks her beauties in her bud again,

And leaves him to base briars.”

Shakspeare is reported to have joined in the composition of the “ *Two Noble Kinsmen*,” from which this passage is taken ; and from the extreme beauty and delicacy of the simile, I am half inclined to ascribe it to him. Again, how exquisitely simple and natural is the following image:—

“ Though I have lost my fortune, and lost you,

For a worthy Father, yet I will not lose

My former virtue ; my integrity

Shall not forsake me : But, as the wild ivy

Spreads and thrives better in some piteous ruin,

Of tower, or defaced temple, than it does

Planted by a new building ; so shall I,

Make my adversity my instrument

To wind me up into a full content.”

The public are much better acquainted with the writings of Massinger than with those of most of his contemporaries: for which distinction he is mainly indebted to the admirable manner in which he has been edited by Mr. Gifford, and to the circumstance of some of his Plays having been illustrated on the Stage by the talents of a popular Actor. I cannot, however, quite agree with Mr. Gifford, when he ranks this Author immediately after Shakspeare. He certainly yields in versatility of talent to Beaumont and Fletcher, whose Comic genius was very great; and in feeling and nature, I by no means think his Tragedies equal to their's, or to Ford's, or Webster's. Massinger excelled in working up a single scene forcibly and effectively, rather than in managing his plots skillfully, or in delineating characters faithfully, and naturally. His catastrophes are sometimes brought about in a very improbable and unnatural manner; as in the "*Bondman*," where the Insurrection of the slaves is quelled by their masters merely shaking their whips at them; and in "*A new Way to pay old Debts*," where *Overreach*, about to murder his daughter, suddenly drops his weapon, and says, "Some undone Widow sits upon my arm, and takes away the use of't." I am aware that the first incident is said to be an historical fact;

but even if it be so, it is not a probable and effective incident in a Drama. “Le vrai n’est pas toujours le vraisemblable.” His characters are certainly drawn with amazing power, especially those in which the blacker passions are depicted; but they are generally out of nature. At least he wanted the art of shading his pictures: he gives us nothing but the bold, prominent features; we miss all the delicate tints of the back ground.

With all these drawbacks, the genius of Massinger is unquestionably great. The sweetness and purity of his style, was not surpassed even in his own days. His choice and management of imagery is generally very happy; excepting that he is apt to pursue a favourite idea too long. His descriptive powers were also very considerable, the clearness and distinctness with which he places objects before our eyes, might furnish models for a Painter. In single scenes too, as I before observed, his genius is great and original. The battle between the Father and Son in the “*Unnatural Combat*,” and the dreadful parley which precedes it, are as powerfully expressed, as they are imagined. Indeed, the genius of Massinger is, perhaps, more conspicuous in this Play, with all its faults, than in any other. The character of *Old Malefort*, although possessing all the defects

which I have pointed out, is a masterly delineation, and ably sustained. Like Ford's *Giovanni*, he is the victim of a guilty passion ; but instead of an enthusiastic, romantic, and accomplished scholar, we have here a veteran warrior, and the perpetrator of many crimes. The flash of lightning by which he is destroyed is another of Massinger's violent catastrophes ; but such a catastrophe is finer and more effective in this Play than in some others, as it seems to harmonise with the tremendous tone of the whole picture.

I have not space to enter into a detailed review of the merits of the rest of Shakspeare's contemporaries. Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Massinger, have perhaps, fewer faults than most of them ; but there are others by whose excellencies they are rivalled, and even surpassed. Ford is the Poet of domestic life ; the lord and ruler of our sighs and tears. No where, not even in the pages of Shakspeare himself, is there to be found any thing more deeply pathetic, or more intensely affecting, than some scenes in the "*Broken Heart*," and the "*Brother and Sister*." But his "web is of a mingled yarn." He delighted too much in violent situations, and shocking catastrophes ; and his style is too bald and unornamented. He cannot shower the sweet flowers of fancy over the

grave, and hide the horrors of his scenes of blood under the bewitching mantle of Poetry. This is the grand secret with which Shakspeare was so well acquainted. We weep and tremble over the scenes of Ford; but we feel a disinclination to take up the volume again, and undergo the same harrowing and unmitigated sensations. In Shakspeare, though we tremble as we read, we still cling to his pages with thrilling interest and unabated delight, and recur to them with feelings of increased admiration.

The same objections will apply to the Dramas of Webster; but his fancy had a far bolder wing than that of Ford, and he, therefore, in that particular, approaches near to the standard of Shakspeare. This Author, with whose name few persons are probably very familiar, enjoyed a great and a deserved reputation among his contemporaries, and will, doubtless, yet emerge from the temporary oblivion in which the forgetful generations who succeeded him have allowed him to sink. Ford, of whom I have just been speaking, says,—

“ Crown him a Poet, whom nor Greece nor Rome
Transcend ;”

and Middleton, another distinguished Dramatic

contemporary, speaking of his Tragedy the "*Duchess of Malfy*," says—

" Thy Monument is raised in thy life time,
Each Man is his own marble.
Thy Epitaph only the title be,
Write *Duchess* ! that will fetch a tear for thee."

The Tragedy here mentioned is certainly one of the most extraordinary compositions in our language. With many faults, and many extravagances, it yet evinces so much sterling merit, such a vivid Poetic fancy, and such power in moving terror and pity, that I know very few Dramatic pieces which are entitled to rank above it. Two similies will sufficiently show the originality and beauty of Webster's imagery. The first illustrates the ingratitude displayed to a faithful servant, who continued attached to his master during his fallen fortunes:—

" Oh! th' inconstant,
And rotten ground of service ! You may see
'Tis e'en like one, that on a Winter's night
Takes a long slumber o'er a dying fire,
As loath to part from't; yet parts thence more cold,
Than when he first sat down."

The Second is contained in the following lines:—

“ An honest Statesman to a Prince
Is like a Cedar planted by a spring :
The spring bathes the tree’s roots, the grateful tree
Rewards it with the shadow.”

Chapman, Middleton, Heywood, Dekker, and Tourneur, occupy honourable stations in what may be called the School of Shakspeare; and Shirley gracefully closes the list, not as one of the greatest, but as the last, of an illustrious phalanx, who disappeared, and left their ranks to be occupied by a body, to whom they bore no more resemblance, than did the Titans who assaulted Olympus, to

“ That small infantry
Warr’d on by Cranes.”

We have now traced the history, and entered into a brief review, of the merits of Dramatic Literature in England, previous to the Restoration; we have seen it’s faint and imperfect dawn in the authors of “ *Gorboduc*,” and “ *Gammer Gurton’s Needle*,” it’s morning light of rich promise in Peele, Lily, and Marlowe; and it’s full meridian of power and splendour, in Shakspeare and his contemporaries. We have now the less gratifying, but not less imperative duty, of the Historian and Critic, to perform, to narrate it’s

degradation and debasement; it's decline and fall: to watch it's downward course from the proud pinnacle on which we have recently contemplated it, until we find it in the present day, in a state where the only consolation left us, is the conviction that it cannot possibly sink any lower: when we find the National Theatres, where delighted and applauding audiences listened to the music of Shakspeare, Fletcher, and Jonson, converted into booths for cattle, and puppet-boxes for Punch; when the boards where Garrick trod are disgraced by hoofs; and when the natural emotions of "*Lear*" and "*Hamlet*" are no longer attractive, unless aided by the contortions of Apes, and the mummeries of Pantomime.

The deposition and death of Charles the First, as we have already had occasion to remark, were events, which, however advantageous they may have proved to the liberties of the Nation, were death blows to Poetry, and the Arts. When Charles ascended the throne, above a Century had elapsed since the civil commotions of the nation had been quieted by the accession of the house of Tudor; and the Ecclesiastical persecutions of Henry, Mary, and Elizabeth, had subsided into something like Religious toleration, if not Reli-

gious liberty. Charles the First, if the incidents of his reign had not turned out so disastrous, bid fair to have proved to England, what Francis the First had been to France, the encourager of the Arts; the munificent patron of their Professors; and an example in the highest station in the realm, of good taste and mental acquirement, which would have been very generally imitated by all who looked up to the Throne as the fountain of emolument and honour.

The triumph of the Puritans effected a sad Revolution in these matters. The days of Jack Cade seemed to have returned, when a man was hanged for being able to write his own name, instead of having a mark to himself like an honest, plain-dealing citizen; and when the nobility were proscribed as national enemies, because, as it was said, they thought it scorn to go in leathern aprons. Painting, Sculpture, Music, and Poetry, but above all Dramatic Poetry, were anathematised as infamous, and abominable; and even Milton considered it necessary to excuse himself to his sect, for writing the fine Tragedy of "*Sampson Agonistes*," by citing the authority of St. Paul, who thought it not unworthy of him to insert a verse of Euripides, the great Tragic writer of Greece, into

the Holy Scriptures :—1 Corinthians, 15th chapter, 33d verse, “ Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners.”

Milton, as a Dramatist, is the connecting link between the writers who flourished previous, and subsequent, to the Restoration: not that he has much in common with either, but of his two Dramas, the first, “ *Comus*,” was written before, and the other, “ *Sampson Agonistes*,” after, that period; and they are each characteristic of the writer at the different periods in which they were written. The first has all the buoyancy and vivacity of youth; is full of high aspirings; of splendid imaginings; the outpourings of a Poetical spirit, before it was soured by disappointment, or fevered by Criticism, or embittered by political, or polemical controversy. The Second is as strongly characteristic of it's Author when “ fallen on evil days, and evil tongues; with darkness and with dangers compassed round.” The utmost severity of thought and diction is observable in this Drama. There are no vagaries of fancy; no symptoms of an unbridled imagination. In thought, expression, sentiment, it is Greek, attic Greek; tinged, however, with that solemn and unearthly character, which it derived from the Sacred nature of it's subject. Both Dramas are worthy of

the Author of "*Paradise Lost*." It is true that they are not structures of the same vastness and magnificence, but they bear evident traces of the master-mind of the same surpassing Architect; they are designed with the same consummate taste and judgment; and are constructed of the same costly, and superb, and imperishable materials.

The Restoration varied only the nature of the poison with which the public taste was infected. The sour manners and fanatical feelings of the Puritans, were exchanged for the licentiousness and frivolity of a depraved and dissipated Court. The Monarch, who had been so long a dependent on the bounty of Louis the Fourteenth, brought with him a taste for French vices, and introduced into the Court of St. James's all the profligacy, without the refinement, of the Tuilleries. The English Stage, in like manner, soon became a bad copy of the French; and Corneille, Racine, and Crevillon, are the literary parents of Dryden, Addison, Rowe, and Young. Dryden's Tragedies have some redeeming passages, but as a whole they are essentially and utterly bad. For character, passion, action, or interest, we search through them in vain. Their Author has, indeed, confessed his own conviction that his powers were not adapted for Dramatic writing, and that he had

meditated the production of an Epic Poem, but that the taste of the age afforded him no encouragement for such a task.

“ Dryden in immortal strain,
Had raised the Table Round again,
But that a ribald King and Court,
Bade him toil on to make them sport :
Demanding for their niggard pay,
Fit for their souls, a looser lay,
Licentious Satire, Song, and Play.”

Otway is a writer of a very different stamp ; and, as a Dramatist, of a far higher order ; although the plague-spots of the age are upon him, licentiousness in his Comic, and bombast and turgidity in his Tragic scenes. But in the latter, where he does not attempt to be sublime, where he confines himself to his own element, the pathetic, I know of no writer who can produce effects more powerful than his. The reception of his “ *Venice Preserved*,” and “ *Orphan*,” on the Stage, when supported by histrionic talent at all commensurate to their merits, is the most triumphant attestation of his pathetic powers that can be imagined. Mirth may be forced ; rapture may be affected ; but tears are unequivocal evidences of the intensity and genuineness of the feeling which they express.

Otway is not remarkable either for skilfulness in the construction of his plots, or truth and force in the delineation of his characters. The plot of the “*Orphan*” is as clumsy as it is indelicate; and that of “*Venice Preserved*” full of glaring improbabilities. Of his characters, *Pierre* is the only one which shews any thing like the finish of the master. The best of the others are but sketches. *Jaffier* is intended by the Author for the likeness of a person of naturally virtuous disposition, driven by the uncontrollable influence of oppression and misfortune, to deeds of desperation and crime. But *Jaffier*, as delineated, is incapable of exciting any feeling but one of unmixed contempt. His affection is puerile and drivelling; his friendship, perfidy and treachery; and what is meant to be represented as his return to the principles of honour and virtue, is but the craven misgivings of pusillanimity and fear.

The beauty and delicacy of Otway’s imagery will be seen in the following example; which is, however, almost too trite for quotation:—

“ You took her up a little tender flower,
Just sprouted on a bank, which the next frost
Had nipt, and with a careful, loving hand,
Transplanted her into your own fair garden,
Where the Sun always shines. There long she flourish’d;

Grew sweet to sense, and lovely to the eye ;
Till at the last a cruel spoiler came,
Cropt this fair rose, and rifled all it's sweetness,
Then threw it like a loathsome weed away."

That his descriptive powers were also of a high order, one instance will suffice to prove:—

" Through a close lane as I pursued my journey,
And meditated on my last night's vision,
I spied a wither'd hag, with age grown double,
Picking dry sticks, and mumbling to herself ;
Her eyes with scalding rheum were gall'd and red,
Cold Palsy shook her head, her hands seem'd wither'd,
And on her crooked shoulders had she wrapt
The tatter'd remnant of an old striped hanging,
Which served to keep her carcass from the cold ;
So there was nothing of a piece about her.
Her lower weeds were all o'er coarsely patch'd
With different colour'd rags, black, red, white, yellow,
And seem'd to speak variety of wretchedness."

The minute and powerful detail of this picture would sustain a comparison with the most celebrated efforts of the Dutch and Flemish schools.

Nathaniel Lee's Dramas are full of faults ; faults of the least venial nature ; but they are evidently the productions of a man of genius, and do not betray a single indication of imbecility or dullness. Their characteristics are summed up in a saying of his own. When the unfortunate Author

was confined in a straight waistcoat in Bedlam, a scribbler who went to visit him, had the cruelty to jeer at his dreadful malady, by observing that it was an easy thing to write like a madman :—" No," said Lee, " it is *not* an easy thing to write like a madman ; but it is very easy to write like a fool."

Lee's scenes have nothing of the fool, but much of the madman in them. They are full of strong and violent effort ; sometimes well and powerfully directed, but often falling short of the object at which it aims. There are passages in Lee's "*Alexander*," in his "*Theodosius*," and in his portion of "*Ædipus*,"—which he wrote in conjunction with Dryden,—which are not unworthy of the brightest names in our dramatic annals. Occasionally too, he could touch a softer note, and waken the tenderest and most pleasing emotions. The following lines on the Nightingale are full of sweetness and pathos :—

" Thus in some poplar shade the Nightingale,
With piercing moans does her lost young bewail ;
Which the rough hind, observing as they lay
Warm in their downy nest, had stolen away :
But she in mournful sounds does still complain,
Sings all the night, though all her songs are vain,
And still renews her miserable strain."

John Crowne was an Author of much repute at the period in which he wrote, but, after a painful examination of his writings, I have found very little which is worth remembering. I have heard of a French work, which consisted of the witticisms of persons who never said more than one good thing in their lives. I have not found many more in the works of John Crowne, but one is so good that I cannot resist the quotation of it:—

“ Thy wit, thy valour, and thy delicate form,
Were mighty faults which the world could not pardon.
No wonder the vile envy of the base
Pursued thee, when the noble could not bear thee :
They cursed thee, as Negroes curse the Sun,
Because thy shining glories blacken'd them.”

Of the remaining Tragedians of this School, Rowe, Hughes, Aaron Hill, Phillips, and Young ; the first, and the last only, are worthy of our attention. Rowe, though deeply infected with the false French taste which was then fashionable, was not unacquainted with the early English writers, and some beneficial effects from this acquaintance are visible in all his Dramas. Perhaps his versification is the best part about him ; and his blank verse has a flow and an easy sweetness, which are advantageously contrasted to the tumidity of Dry-

den, and the feebleness of Otway. His "*Jane Shore*," in which he professedly imitated Shakspeare, and his "*Fair Penitent*," which is an audacious plagiarism from Massinger, are the best of his productions. Although they do not speak much for his originality, they are creditable to his taste; and prove, I think, that it was no defect in his own judgment, but a compliance with the popular opinion, that led him to French models for the general cast and character of his works.

Young's Tragedies of the "*Revenge*," "*Bursiris*," and the "*Brothers*," are evidently the productions of no ordinary mind. For high and eloquent declamation, they are equal to any thing which the French School has produced, either in it's native soil, or in our imitative Country. Though the first is the only one of these three Tragedies which keeps possession of the Stage, yet "*Bursiris*" appears to me to possess the most merit. The principal character is drawn with as much force and decision as *Zanga*, but has more of real human nature in it's composition. *Zanga* is a fine Poetical study; the grandeur of the conception, and the power of the execution, are equal; but it has not much of truth or Nature in it's composition. Compare it with the *Iago* of Shakspeare, of which it is evidently a copy, and it is like comparing a

lay figure with a Statue. One is a fitting vehicle to convey to us the drapery of the Poet's fancy, and the folds and forms in which he chooses to array it; but the other has the truth and power of Nature stamped upon every limb.

But it is not in the Tragedy of this period that we are to look for the Dramatic Genius of England. She took refuge in the arms of Comedy. A race of brilliant, but profligate, Wits arose, whose powers are only eclipsed by those of the worthies of the Elizabethan age: Wycherley, Farquhar, Sedley, Etherege, Dufey, Centlivre, Vanbrugh, Congreve, Hoadley, Cibber, and Gay; these are names, of which, notwithstanding their blemishes, our Nation cannot, and ought not to be otherwise than proud. The Dramas of the ages of Elizabeth and Charles, are diametrically opposite to each other, both in their excellencies and their defects. The first are all Nature, but Nature in her sweetest, truest, and most graceful forms: the second are all Art, but Art in her most polished, pleasing, and elegant costumes. The first painted passions; the second, manners: the first led us through the mazes of the human heart; the second makes us acquainted with the modes of human society. In the first, we find Geography, Chronology, and propriety of costume and manners, set at defiance.

In the second we find unity of character, and natural sentiment and passion, treated with equal indifference. If Shakspeare can unlock the secrets of the human heart, he cares not to shipwreck a vessel on the coast of Bohemia, or to make *Pandarus* of Troy talk about Winchester geese. If Congreve can dazzle by his brilliant dialogue, and his smart repartee, he does not shrink from putting the most splendid wit into the mouths of his fools, and exhibiting characters who are sunk in the depths of disaster, full of sprightliness and merriment. Shakspeare makes us forget the Author; Congreve makes us think of no one else. We rise from the scenes of the first, overwhelmed with the sorrows of *Hamlet*, or of *Othello*, or of *Lear*. We close the pages of the second, charmed with the wit, the sprightliness, and the vivacity of Congreve.

I have chosen Congreve as the champion and exemplar of the second School, because he is, in many particulars, the most eminent Scholar which it has produced. Wit was it's grand distinguishing feature, and Congreve was one of the wittiest writers that, perhaps, any age or nation has given birth to. But the Dramatist has to paint character, and he who has only one colour in which to dip his pencil, Wit, cannot produce a

true, a natural, or even a permanently pleasing picture. We may gaze upon the Sun till we see nothing but darkling motes; and so Congreve's scenes fatigue us by their very brilliancy. All his characters are like himself, witty. They are, if I may borrow an image from the Hindoo Mythology, all Avatars of the Author; they have no individuality, no specific likeness. What Churchill said of Quin as an Actor, may be applied to Congreve as a writer:—

“ Self still like oil upon the surface play'd,
And marr'd th' impression that the Author made.”

Still, as pictures of manners and society, the writings of Congreve, and his contemporaries, and immediate predecessors, are invaluable. They have made the age of furbelows and brocade, shoe-buckles and hoop-petticoats, live for ever. They have rendered the Parks classic ground. They have made the very air there, redolent of wit and pleasantry. Rotten-Row, the Mulberry-Walk, and the Mall, are as immortal as the plains of Troy, or the fields of Marathon. Every walk, every turning, is peopled with the gay creations of Congreve, of Farquhar, and of Vanbrugh. We expect to see *Sir Fopling Flutter*, or *Sir Harry Wildair* on every bench. We hear the gay laugh

of *Clarinda* on every breeze ; and the stately figures of *Millamont*, and *Belinda*, and *Clarissa*, glide past the mind's eye as youthful and as bewitching as ever.

Congreve had, I think, high Tragic powers, if he had chosen to exert them, and to give them their full and natural play. When he wrote the "*Mourning Bride*" he thought it necessary to mount himself upon stilts. I do not, therefore, refer to that Play, when I allude to him as a Tragedian. But there are touches of pathos, and even of sublimity, in some of his Comic scenes, which show the hand of a master. The destitute condition of *Valentine* in "*Love for Love*," is strongly, and even powerfully, painted ; and the characters of *Maskwell*, and of *Lord* and *Lady Touchwood*, in the "*Way of the World*," are full of the Poetry of passion, and of interest. The serious scenes in Vanburgh's "*Provoked Husband*" have been much admired, but they are nothing in comparison with those in which these characters appear ; and set off as they are, by the broad Comedy, and almost Farce, of *Lord Frisk*, *Brisk*, and *Lady Pliant*, they produce an effect which reminds us, "not to speak it profanely," of that produced by the juxtaposition of the *Fool* and *Lear*.

Farquhar has not the wit of Congreve, but he has more humour; and is, on the whole, a far better Dramatist. His Plots are not so elaborately constructed, but they have more vitality in them; they are brought about in a more natural manner; and the Characters contribute more to their developement. The observations which I have made on the want of individuality, and specific likeness of character, will apply less to the scenes of Farquhar, than to those of any of his contemporaries. His characters are often drawn improbably, and out of nature, but still they are active personages, and agents in the Drama, which cannot be very often said of Congreve. He also possesses much genuine humour, as his characters of *Sir Harry Wildair*, *Beau Clincher*, and *Serjeant Kite*, sufficiently shew. Farquhar has more of the kindly spirit of the old English Dramatists about him, than any writer of his times: and is a less bitter Satirist than either Congreve, Wycherley, or Vanbrugh. His arrows are bright and keen, but those of his contemporaries are poisoned: Farquhar makes the sides ache, but Vanbrugh makes the heart ache also.

The last-mentioned author is as appalling a Satirist as Swift. His pictures of human nature are hideously like; they are true to the very wrinkle. Swift said that he hated the Ourang Outang, be-

cause it was so like us ; and so we may say of Vanbrugh's delineations of character. All the vices of humanity are treasured up in them ; yet they are not natural delineations. They are the bad parts of human nature picked out and separated from those redeeming qualities, which scarcely the vilest of mankind are not without. Such writers as Vanbrugh and Swift do not use the vices and follies of mankind for the purpose of instruction or amusement ; but stand aloof from humanity like the *Mephistophiles* of Goethe, and make it's weaknesses and it's crimes the objects of their fiend-like derision.

These three Authors occupy the foremost places in that School of Comedy, which flourished in England from the days of Charles the Second, to those of Anne. I have endeavoured, briefly and succinctly, to sum up their merits and defects. They were certainly vastly inferior the Dramatists of the Elizabethan age ; but, they were at least as much superior to any School which has succeeded them. The Elizabethan writers possessed great advantages from the character of the times in which they lived. They revelled in the holiday of intellect ; in the sweet Spring morning of wit and genius, which dawned upon the world after the long and gothic darkness of the middle ages. The genius of a Shakspeare cannot be expected to revisit us,

until after the concurrence of circumstances similar to those by which the age in which he existed was preceded. Like the dew of the early morning, darkness and gloom must once more envelope the Earth, before we can gaze upon it again.

The attack of Jeremy Collier upon the profligacy and licentiousness of the Stage, although it's effects were not immediately felt, ultimately proved the destruction of this School of Comedy. Congreve confessed his fault; and Vanbrugh and Cibber wrote the "*Provoked Husband*," of which the tendency is unexceptionable, as an expiation for the immorality of their former productions.

This Comedy may be said to have given rise to the Sentimental School; the most meretricious and contemptible of all the demons of dulness which ever possessed the Stage. I do not, of course, mean to apply this censure to the very elegant production which I have just mentioned, and from which I have considered this School as taking it's rise; nor to the Comedies of Sir Richard Steele, who may be ranked amongst it's adherents. The last mentioned Author had a quiet natural vein of humour, and a delicate perception of the foibles of human character, which give great zest and interest to his scenes: though even in his works we find the Comic Muse somewhat abated

of those smiles which are hers by prescriptive right. She affects the grave airs of her Tragic Sister, and wears them, at the best, but awkwardly. She may smile, but she never laughs:—

“ Mirth that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides,”

are banished from the works of the Sentimental Writers. A well-bred simper, or a demure dimple, is the utmost extent of hilarity in which they indulge. What an uproar, what a devastation, would the introduction of such a person as *Sir John Falstaff* among the *Dramatis Personæ* of our modern playwrights, occasion! How would *Lady Elinor Irwin* receive the addresses of such a person as *Sir Toby Belch*? and how would *Old Dornton* look, if he found young *Master Launcelot Gobbo* capering about his banking house? In truth, this Sentimental style of writing is the most artificial and worthless that was ever imposed upon the public, in the name of Comedy. Goldsmith wrote amidst the very hey-day of this fashionable folly; but he rolled his own pure tide of wit and humour through, and stainless and unmixed with the surrounding vortex, as the River Rhone rushes through the Lake of Geneva. His two admirable Comedies of the “*Good Natured Man*,” and

“ *She Stoops to Conquer*,” are the greenest spots in the Dramatic waste of the period of which we are speaking. They are worthy of the Author of the “ *Vicar of Wakefield* ;” and to praise them more highly is impossible. Wit, without licentiousness ; Humour, without extravagance ; brilliant and elegant dialogue ; and forcible but natural delineation of character ; are the excellencies with which his pages are prodigally strewn.

Cumberland was the last, and the best of the Sentimental School. His Genius was of too masculine a character to submit entirely to the fetters which the popular prejudices would impose upon it ; and his taste too pure, to relish the sickly viands with which the public appetite was palled. But, even in the extinction of this School, we cannot congratulate ourselves in the elevation of any thing better in its place. “ Bad begins, but worse remains behind.” Our present Lecture has been a history of the gradual declension of the British Drama :—

“ We have fallen upon our gloomy days,
 Star after star decays ;
 Every bright name that shed
 Light o’er the land is fled !”

The Shakspearean School was succeeded by that of Congreve : there we sunk a step, but we

were on a lofty eminence still. The Congreve School gave place to that of the Sentimental Artists. This was a more fearful declension: but even here we met with elegant writers, although we looked in vain for skilful or interesting Dramatists. The next "change that comes o'er the spirit of our dream," presents us with the ultra German horrors of Lewis, and *his* School. This is the very Antipodes of the Sentimental School: the badge and banner of one is the cambric handkerchief; of the other the gory dagger. Instead of high flown sentiments of virtue and honour, we have murderers and spectres; trap-doors and long corridors; daggers and poison-bowls; faces whitened over with meal, and hands looking as sanguinary as red paint can make them. This School has also had it's day, and fallen into the "sere and yellow leaf," to make way for Juvenile Roscii, Elephants, and rope-dancers! Various entertainments have since been resorted to for the edification and amusement of the enlightened public. Sometimes it has been treated with the sight of a Monkey which can dance on the tight rope like a man; and at others, with a Man who can climb trees and crack nuts like a Monkey. For such refined amusements as these have we exchanged the Genius of our early Dramatists: a jewel, which, as *Shylock*

says, “ we would not have given for a wilderness of monkeys.” Occasionally, however, a gleam of light has broken in upon the general gloom of the Dramatic hemisphere; and the names of Foote, Garrick, Colman the Elder, and, “ the greatest is behind,” Sheridan, shew, amidst the surrounding mass of dulness and folly, like the stars of heaven, more fiery by night’s blackness.

Sheridan is, indeed, a golden link which connects us with the Authors of better days. He has wit; pure, polished, genuine wit. He has humour; not, perhaps, of quite so pure an order, a little forced and overstrained, but it’s root is in Nature, whatever aberrations it may spread into in it’s branches. His dialogue is of matchless brilliancy; so brilliant as to enchain the attention, and to blind us to the grand defect of his Plays, their want of action, and of what is technically called, business. This defect alone shuts out Sheridan from taking his place by the side of the elder Dramatists, and assigns him his situation a step lower among the writers of the age of Charles. He is, however, free from their impurities of thought and language; their equal in wit, and their superior in genuine humour.

The Drama of the present day is, with some few exceptions, a compound of all the vices which

characterised the preceding Schools; excepting, I am happy to say, the profligacy of the writers of the Restoration. If we are dull, we are, at least, decent. The Dramas, however, which are now produced, are as lawless and irregular as the writers of the Elizabethan School; turgid and bombastic as the Tragedies which succeeded it; mawkish as the Comedies of the Sentimentalists; and extravagant and outrageous as the maddest productions of Germany. The works of Joanna Baillie—unquestionably the greatest Dramatist who has appeared here since the Restoration,—are driven from the Stage; and, although Shakspeare is still endured, he is made to bow his “eminent tops to our low heads;” his Tragedies must have a happy ending, and his Comedies must be “interspersed with Songs.” But then, the tricks of *Harlequin*, the mysteries of Melo Drame, the prancing of real horses, and the tumbling of real water; these are surely enough to compensate for the absence of Shakspeare, and all his trumpery.

We have passed, it may be thought, a severe censure upon the present state of the English Drama; but, we speak it “more in sorrow than in anger.” When we consider the splendid heritage of talent and genius which we derive from our ancestors; when we recollect the immortal pro-

ductions which have been bequeathed to the English Stage, from the days of Shakspeare to those of Sheridan; when we mark, too, the energy and intelligence of the present day, as shewn in every other quarter, while the Stage alone is usurped by imbecility and dulness;—the mingled feelings of shame and astonishment are too powerful for their expression to be repressed. The causes of this national degradation are various. One of the most obvious and powerful, unquestionably is the enormous size of the Theatres. The Music of the voice, the magic of the eye, the passion and propriety of the gestures, these are the true and legitimate elements of Dramatic effect; but these, in the immense area upon which they are exerted, are lost to the largest proportion of the auditory. Hence, the actor distorts his features, strains his voice, and throws himself into violent and unnatural attitudes; and when it is at length found that even these fail of producing the requisite effect, then pomp and shew, decoration and noise, unmeaning bustle and preposterous parade, are called in to fill up the melancholy hiatus.

Accordingly, the Managers and the public sustain a re-action from each other; the former create in the latter an appetite for Spectacle and shew; and the appetite thus created in the latter, calls upon

the former for fresh efforts to gratify it. Thus the state of things may be prolonged *ad infinitum*, unless some voice should be raised sufficiently powerful to induce a change of system.

But, potent as are the causes to which we have last alluded, in promoting the degeneracy of the Drama, still it must not be disguised that these are not solely the origin of the evil. The incompetency of the Authors in whose hands rests the task of winning the public taste back to the legitimate Drama, is another, and not less influential cause. The Spectacles and Pageants with which the Managers feast the eyes of their Audiences, are as nearly as possible, perfect in their way. The Tragedies and Comedies which are occasionally produced, are the farthest possible removed from the standard to which they aspire. The Public chooses between them ; and we can scarcely blame it's decision :—

“ Now forced, at length, her ancient reign to quit,
Nature sees Dulness lay the ghost of Wit ;
Exulting Folly hails the joyous day,
And Pantomime and Song confirm her sway.”

LECTURE THE FIFTH.

DIDACTIC, DESCRIPTIVE, PASTORAL, AND
SATIRICAL POETRY.

Nature of Didactic and Descriptive Poetry :—*Death and Life*, the earliest Specimen of English Blank Verse :—Bishop Hall's *Satires* :—Brown's *Pastorals* :—Donne :—Butler's *Hudibras* :—Dryden, Pope, Akenside, Dyer, Armstrong, Young, and Goldsmith :—Thomson's *Seasons* :—Cowper.

OUR Lectures have already exhausted the more interesting topics, which a review of the history and merits of English Poetry presents to our consideration. The Harvest is past; and, we have now little more to do, than to garner in the comparatively scanty gleanings, which remain behind. The subject of the present Lecture is English Didactic, and Descriptive Poetry; including Pastoral and Satire. The Didactic Muse has been called "the least attractive of the Nine;" but if she has less beauty, she has, perhaps, more truth than her sisters. If she cannot soar as high, she treads more firmly. She addresses herself, not to

the Imagination and the heart, but to the understanding. She seeks not to please the fancy, but to improve the mind. She is, in fact, however, scarcely a legitimate denizen of the world of Poetry. She is too nearly allied to Prose, to mingle quite freely and gracefully with those gay "creatures of the elements," who people the regions of Fancy. She is an amphibious animal; "parcel woman, parcel fish." She has powers which those who are exclusively confined to either element, do not possess; but then in neither does she move with the same freedom and unconstrainedness as they do. She has not the real sober prose step of the Historian and the Essayist, any more than she has the bold and fearless pinion of the Epic Poet, and the Dramatist. She has not "angelic wings, nor feeds on manna." She has rather the wings of the flying-fish, which, for a moment, elevate her towards the heaven of Poetry, whence she soon sinks exhausted, into her own native element of Prose.

The works of the Descriptive and Pastoral Muses are to the Epic and the Drama, what a trim and elegant flower-garden is to the wildness and magnificence of unadorned Nature; who is, "when unadorned, adorned the most." The descriptive passages which spring up amidst all the

awfulness and sublimity of Shakspeare and Milton, are like the delicious fruits and fragrant flowers which are found among the grandest and most terrific passages of Alpine scenery; while the continuous descriptions of Thomson and Cowper, are like flowers of every imaginable form and hue, exotic and native, got together and crowded into one bed. They bring home to those who cannot go in search of them, those treasures of Nature, which bolder spirits are content to scale Alpine steeps, and dive amidst mountain torrents to attain. The mind is not always prepared to accompany Shakspeare or Milton in their daring flights, any more than the body is always at leisure to undertake a journey to the Andes, or the Appenines. Then the pages of Goldsmith, and Thomson, and Cowper, yield as much enjoyment to the one, as the velvet lawn and the gaily ornamented parterre do to the other.

English Poetry has been, from the earliest period, as rich in description as the English taste has been observed to be particularly attached to external Nature. The humblest and most closely-confined denizens of our English Cities have been remarked by foreigners to cherish this taste in the possession of a box of mignonette, a vase of flowers, or a solitary myrtle, or geranium. So,

too, in the most humble of our versifiers, if they possess any Poetical powers at all, they will be roused into action by the inspiration excited on beholding the face of Nature.

The earliest English Poets were fond and acute observers of Nature. The touches of scenic description in the ancient Ballads are numerous and beautiful ; and Percy has preserved a fine relique of an old descriptive Poem, entitled “ *Death and Life*,” the beauties of which cannot fail to be perceived, even through the veil of uncouth and antique language in which they are enveloped. The Poem is supposed by Percy to have been written as early as, if not earlier than, the time of Langbaine ; and it is curious, as the oldest specimen of Blank Verse in our language. The following is an allegorical description of Life :—

“ She was brighter of her blee, than was the bright sonne ;
Her rudd redder than the rose, that on the rise hangeth.
Meekly smiling with her mouth, and merry in her lookes ;
Ever laughing for love, as she the like wolde.
And as shee came by the banks, the boughs eche one
They lowted to that ladye, and lay’d forth their branches ;
Blossoms and burgens breathed full sweete :
Flowers flourish’d in the frith, where she forth stepp’d ;
And the grass that was grey, greened belive.”

But it is to that golden age of our Literature,

the reign of Queen Elizabeth, that we must look for the earliest, and some of the best, specimens of Satire and Pastoral; considered as a class of Poetry, distinct from, and unmixed with, any other. I allude more particularly to the Satires of Bishop Hall, and the "*Britannia's Pastorals*" of William Browne; two names which, I believe, are still "caviare to the million;" are unknown to the general reader; and are not admitted into many of the collections of the general body of English Poetry. To Mr. Warton the public are indebted for having first drawn their attention to the beauties of Hall. This powerful and truly original writer is the earliest professed Satirist among our Poets; and he has himself alluded to that fact with a proud and pardonable egotism:—

" I first adventure, follow me who list,
And be the Second English Satirist."

His Satires, besides their own intrinsic Poetical excellencies, are valuable to the Antiquary as presenting a most vivid and faithful picture of the manners of our ancestors; their fashions, follies, vices, and peculiarities. These Hall has touched with a powerful and unsparing hand. Scribblers, Lawyers, Parsons, Physicians, all those unfortu-

nate classes of men, who have, from time immemorial, enjoyed the unenvied privilege of attracting the peculiar notice of the Satiric Muse, are by him laid bare and shrinking to the scorn and hatred of Mankind. Hall is, I believe, well known as a Divine: his Sermons and Meditations having procured him a high rank among polemical writers. It is my object, however, to notice him merely as a Poet, and I shall, therefore, make a few extracts from his Satires. The following tirade against the Legal Profession is a fair specimen of the force and fearlessness of his style:—

“ Woe to the weal where many Lawyers be,
For there is sure much store of malady :
'Twas truly said, and truly was foreseen,
The fat kine are devoured of the lean.
Genus and species long since barefoot went
Upon their ten toes, in wild wonderment ;
Whiles Father Bartol on his footcloth rode,
Upon high pavement, gayly silver-strew'd.
Each home-bred Science percheth in the chair,
While Sacred Arts grovel on the groundsell bare ;
Since pedling barbarisms 'gan be in request,
Nor classic tongues, nor Learning found no rest.
The crouching Client with low bended knee,
And many worships and fair flattery,
Tells on his tale as smoothly as he list ;
But still the Lawyer's eye squints on his fist ;
If that seem lined with a larger fee,
Doubt not the suit, the law is plain for thee.”

Though must he buy his vainer hope with price,
 Disclout his crowns, and thank him for advice.
 So have I seen, in a tempestuous stowre,
 Some briar bush shew shelter from the shower,
 Unto the hopeful sheep, that fain would hide
 His fleecy coat from that same angry tide :
 The ruthless briar, regardless of his plight,
 Lays hold upon the fleece he should acquite ;
 And takes advantage of the careless prey,
 That thought she in securer shelter lay.
 The day is fair, the sheep would far to feed,
 The tyrant briar holds fast his shelter's meed,
 And claims it for the fee of his defence,
 So robs the sheep in favour's fair pretence."

The following lines are in ridicule of the Amatory Poetry of the age, and of the exaggerated compliments which the Poets addressed to their Mistresses :—

" As witty Pontan in great earnest said,
 His Mistress' breasts were like two weights of lead ;
 Another thinks her teeth might liken'd be,
 To two fair ranks of pales of ivory ;
 To fence in, sure, the wild beast of her tongue,
 From either going far, or going wrong ;
 Her grinders like two chalk-stones in a mill,
 Which shall with time and wearing wax as ill
 As old Catillas, who doth every night
 Lay up her holy pegs till next daylight,
 And with them grind soft simp'ring all the day ;
 When, lest her laughter should her mouth betray,

Her hands must hide it; if she would but smile,
 Fain would she seem all fire, and frolic still :
 Her forehead fair is like a brazen hill,
 Whose wrinkled furrows which her age doth breed,
 Are daubed full of Venice chalk for need ;
 Her eyes, like silver saucers fair beset
 With shining amber, and with shady let ;
 Her lids like Cupid's bow-case, where he'll hide
 The weapon that doth wound the wanton eyed :
 Her chin, like Pindus', or Parnassus' hill,
 Where down descends the flowing stream, doth fill
 The well of her fair mouth. Each hath his praise,
 Who would not but wed Poets now-a-days !"

That Hall could compliment as elegantly, as he
 could satirise unsparingly, a short Epigram will,
 however, amply prove. It is entitled,—

“ ON MR. GREENHAM'S BOOK OF THE SABBATH.

While Greenham writeth on the Sabbath's rest,
 His Soul enjoys not what his pen exprest :
 His work enjoys not what itself doth say,
 For it shall never find one resting day.
 A thousand hands shall toss each page and line,
 Which shall be scanned by a thousand eyne.
 This Sabbath's rest, or that Sabbath's unrest,
 'Tis hard to say which is the happiest."

Brown is one of the sweetest Pastoral Writers
 in the world. It has been complained, that Eng-
 lish Literature, however rich in other respects,

is very defective in Pastoral Poetry; but this is a complaint which can only be made by Critics who are ignorant of the existence of such a writer as Brown. Of the more popular Pastorals, the artificial affectations of Shenstone, Phillips, Hammond, and a thousand others, I wish to say little or nothing. The tinsel is by this time pretty well rubbed off the meretricious baubles which so long pleased the public taste; and the trumpery materials of which all their finery was composed, is beginning to be properly appreciated. A Poem is no longer supposed to be wonderfully natural and Pastoral, merely because it makes love rhyme to dove; breeze to trees; and mountains to fountains. The Shepherds and Shepherdesses, or rather the Ladies and Gentlemen in disguise, like the *Beef-eater* in Sheridan's "*Critic*," who sat upon green hillocks, with Pastoral pipes in their hands, talking about Love and Arcadia, have been discovered to be very insipid and unnatural personages, ever since readers have made use of their eyes, looked into the world and Nature for themselves, and found that no such society, or scenery, is, or ever was, in existence. Brown is a writer thoroughly and entirely English. His scenery is English. He paints not Arcadia, or Utopia; but he takes us to the leafy shores of Devon, and the fertile banks of Tamar and

describes their beauties with the ardour of a lover, and the truth of a Painter. He does not introduce us to Naiads, or Dryads; to Pan, or to Apollo; but to the fair and smiling faces with which our own green fields are peopled, and to the rustic manners of the English Villages. His Music is not of the oaten stop, or of the pastoral pipe, or of the wild harp of antiquity; but of the ploughman's whistle, the milkmaid's song, the sheep-bell, the minstrelsy rung out from beneath some neighbouring spire. Shepherds piping all night under some hawthorn bush are not often seen in our northern climate; and Dryads, and Nymphs, and Satyrs, harmonise as ill with the features of English scenery, as Dr. Bentley, in the celebrated picture which decorates a certain public building in London, swimming with his wig and gown on, in the Thames, does with the water nymphs and tritons who surround him. Browne confines himself to the scenery, and to the manners, which he has seen and known. His works, although full of truth and nature, are rich in Poetry and imagination: for to these nature and truth are not opposed, but are the best and surest inspirers and auxiliaries. The Poet's address to England is full of patriotism and feeling:—

“ Hail! thou my native soil, thou blessed spot
Whose equal all the world affordeth not;

Shew me, who can, so many crystal rills,
Such well-clothed vallies, or aspiring hills ;
Such wood-grounds, pastures, quarries, wealthy mines ;
Such rocks, in whom the diamond fairly shines ;
And if the Earth can show the like again,
Yet will she fail in her sea-ruling men."

Brown, however, in enumerating the excellent productions of our native Island, has very ungallantly omitted one, which did not escape the notice of Thomson, when making a similar enumeration:—

" May my song soften, as thy daughters, I,
Britannia! hail, for beauty is their own."

I subjoin one other instance of his descriptive powers, which is said, by those acquainted with the scenery described,—the banks of the Tamar, in Devonshire,—to be an extraordinarily faithful delineation of the spot:—

" Between two rocks, immortal without mother,
That stand as if outfacing one another,
There ran a creek up, intricate and blind,
As if the waters hid them from the wind,
Which never wash'd, but at a higher tide,
The frizzled cotes which do the mountains hide ;
Where never gale was longer known to stay,
Than from the smooth wave it had swept away
The new divorced leaves, that from each side
Left the thick boughs to dance out with the tide.

At further end the creek, a stately wood
Gave a kind shadow to the brackish flood ;
Made up of trees, not less kenn'd by each skiff,
Than that sky-scaling peak of Teneriffe ;
Upon whose tops the hernshaw bred her young,
And hoary moss upon their branches hung ;
Whose rugged rinds sufficient were to shew,
Without their height, what time they 'gan to grow."

Donne is another of our best ancient Satirists, and was also, like Hall, a dignified Prelate ; having been Rector of St. Dunstan's in the West, and Dean of St. Paul's. He was the founder of that School in Poetry which has been somewhat improperly styled the Metaphysical ; which attained it's greatest elevation in Cowley, and may be said to have become extinct with Spratt. Donne is as full of far-fetched conceits, and recondite illustrations, or rather obscurations, as Cowley ; without, however, being possessed of any thing approaching to the same genuine Poetical powers. Still he is a writer of great fancy and ingenuity. His Satires are more remarkable for wit, than for severity. He laughs at Vice and Folly ; but holds them up to derision, rather than overwhelms them with punishment ; and, in this respect, offers many points of contrast to his brother Satirist, Hall, of whom I have just been speaking. The first points out the deformity of vice ; the other exhibits it's

danger. One holds it up to derision; the other to execration. One exposes it to the gibes and the jeers of the world; the other devotes it to the axe, the scourge, and the gibbet.

Butler's "*Hudibras*" is a production of matchless wit and fancy; but the construction of the story, and the delineation of the characters, have been praised far beyond their merits. In these particulars it has very slender claims to originality. Cervantes is evidently the model which Butler followed; and *Hudibras* is Don Quixote turned Puritan. He has exchanged the helmet of Malbrino for the close cap of Geneva. Instead of encountering Giants and Enchanters; he wages war with Papists and Prelatists. Instead of couching his lance at tilts and tournaments; he mounts the pulpit, and harangues the "long-eared" multitude. He is not quite so unsophisticated a Lunatic as Quixote. When his own interest is concerned, his apprehension becomes wonderfully keener. Like *Hamlet*, he is but "mad North-north-west; when the Wind is Southerly, he knows a hawk from a hand-saw." Ralpho, in like manner, is but a Conventicle edition of Sancho; but who can wonder that Butler should have failed in copying from such models as these? The Knight of La Mancha is, like Shakspeare's *Richard*, "him-

self—alone !” The Book in which his adventures are recorded, is—shall I say, perfect? Perhaps, I may not apply such an epithet to the production of human Genius; but it is matchless, it is unimitated, it is inimitable. It is, however, possible to be a great and powerful genius, and yet to be inferior to Cervantes: such is Butler. His Book cannot be expected to be so fascinating, for it’s subject is far more repulsive. The Knight’s greatest weaknesses are amiable, and of vices he has none. We sympathise in all his misfortunes, and almost wish him success in his wildest enterprises. We can hardly help quarrelling with the Windmills for resisting his attack; and feel inclined to tilt a lance in support of his chivalrous assault upon the flock of sheep. Butler certainly might have made the fanaticism of Hudibras more amiable, and more sincere, without at all weakening either the truth or the comic force of the picture. As it is, we rather turn from it with disgust, than gaze upon it with enjoyment. These observations, however, apply only to our Author’s delineations of character, and not to the fine touches of Satire, and to the keen and profound observations on morals and manners, in which his work is so rich. His genius was not Dramatic, but didactic. He was not an inventor, but an observer. His Satire is keen

and caustic; his wit brilliant and delightful. His knowledge of the Arts and Sciences appears to have been profound; and he has brought a wonderful variety of attainment and research to the embellishment of his Poem. He has also enriched it with many beauties of thought and diction, which form a strong contrast to it's general ludicrous cast and character. Nothing, for instance, can be finer than the following lines:—

“ The Moon put off her veil of light
That hides her by the day from sight;
Mysterious veil! of brightness made,
That's both her lustre and their shade.”

This, besides being poetically beautiful, is philosophically true; the rays of the Sun being the cause of our seeing the Moon by night, and of our not seeing her by day.

Dryden occupies the foremost place in the foremost ranks of English Didactic Writers. We have already had occasion to speak of him as a Narrative and Dramatic Poet, and shall therefore, be proportionably brief in our observations upon his merits in the present instance. His Satire is appalling, and tremendous; and not the less so, for it's extreme polish and splendour. It excites our indignation against it's objects, not only on

account of the follies, or faults, which it imputes to them, but also on account of their writhing beneath the infliction of so splendid a weapon. We forget the offender in the awfulness and majesty of the power by which he is crushed. Instead of shrinking at the horror of the carnage, we are lost in admiration of the brilliancy of the victory. Like the lightning of heaven, the Satire of Dryden throws a splendour around the objects which it destroys. He has immortalised the persons whom he branded with infamy and contempt; for who would have remembered Shadwell, if he had not been handed down to everlasting fame as Mac Flecnœ?

Pope is usually ranked in the School of Dryden, but he has few either of the faults or excellencies of his master. To begin with that for which he has been most lauded, his versification is vastly inferior to that of Dryden. What he has gained in ease and sweetness, he has lost in majesty and power. Dryden left our English versification at a point from which it has since rather retrograded than advanced. Pope polished and levelled it; but he polished away much of it's grandeur, as well as of it's roughness, and levelled the rocks which impelled, as well as the stones which impeded, it's majestic current. Pope had fewer opportunities

for observation than Dryden, and perhaps improved those which he had, less than he did. But he had a finer fancy, and I am almost inclined to say, in opposition to the popular opinion, that he possessed more genius. I know of nothing so original and imaginative in the whole range of Dryden's Poetry as the "*Rape of the Lock*;" no descriptions of Nature which can compare with those in Pope's "*Windsor Forest*;" and nothing so tender and feeling as many parts of the "*Elegy on the Death of an unfortunate Lady*," and the "*Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard*." Pope's Satire, however, is neither so keen nor so bright as that of Dryden; whom he attacks, he butchers; whom he cuts, he mangles. He shews us not the lifeless carcass of his victim, but the writhing and tortured limbs. We never feel any thing like sympathy for the object of Dryden's Satire. His seems to be the fiat of unerring justice which it would be almost impiety to dispute. Pope exhibits more of the accuser than the Judge. Petty interests, and personal malice, instead of a love of justice, and a hatred of vice, appear to be the powers which nerve his arm. The victim is sure to fall beneath his blow, but the deed, however righteous, inspires us with no very affectionate feelings for his executioner.

Akenside's "*Pleasures of Imagination*" is a very brilliant and pleasing production. Every page shews the refined taste and cultivated mind of the Author. That it can strictly be called a work of genius, I am not prepared to admit. The ideas are not generally new; and I am afraid that they are often even common-place. They are clothed, however, in elegant versification; they are illustrated with much variety, and ingenuity; and they invariably tend to the advancement of good taste, and good feeling. Occasionally, too, Akenside soars beyond his ordinary height, as in his description of the Soul:—

“ The high-born Soul

Disdains to rest her Heav'n-aspiring wing
Beneath it's native quarry. Tired of earth,
And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft;
Through fields of air pursues the flying storm,
And, yoked with whirlwinds, and the northern blast,
Sweeps the long track of day.”

This passage, however, is remarkable for a confusion of metaphors of which Akenside is not very often guilty. The “native quarry” of a wing would, I fear, very much puzzle any Painter to represent accurately.

His Hymns and Odes have long since fallen

into oblivion, and I do not feel inclined to disturb their rest. His Inscriptions, however, have an attic terseness and force, which are unequalled by any productions of the same class in our language, excepting, perhaps, by a few of our contemporary, Southey's. One example of Akenside's Inscriptions—that for a column at Runnymede,—will suffice:—

“Thou, who the verdant plain dost traverse here,
While Thames among his willows from thy view
Retires, Oh Stranger! stay thee, and around,
The scene contemplate well. *This* is the place
Where England's ancient Barons, clad in arms,
And stern with conquest, from the Tyrant King,
Then render'd tame, did challenge and secure
The Charter of thy Freedom. Pass not on
Till thou hast bless'd their memory, and paid
Those thanks, which God appointed the reward
Of public virtue. And if chance, thy home
Salute thee with a Father's honour'd name,
Go, call thy sons, instruct them what a debt
They owe their ancestors; and make them swear
To pay it, by transmitting down entire,
The sacred rights to which themselves were born!”

Dyer's and Armstrong's Didactic Poems are written upon subjects which do not seem peculiarly qualified to lend Inspiration to the Muse; that of the first being Sheep-shearing, and that of

the second, Physic. They have both, however, been more successful with those subjects than could have been reasonably expected. Dyer is, nevertheless, better, and deserves to be better remembered, as the Poet of "*Grongar-Hill*," than of the "*Fleece*;" and Armstrong in his "*Art of Preserving Health*" has done wonders with a somewhat repulsive theme. He pleads hard in favour of it's aptness for Poetical illustration, and reminds us that the ancients acknowledged "one power of Physic, melody, and song." This, however, is, I fear, less calculated to allure than to repel the readers of Poetry, and to have the same effect upon them, as Apollo's own enumeration of his accomplishments had upon Daphne whom he was pursuing:—

" Stay, stay, gentle Maiden, why urge thus your flight,
I'm the Great God of Song, and of Physic, and Light,
At the dreadful word Physic the nymph fled more fast,
At the fatal word Physic she doubled her haste."

This Poem contains one very noble passage, which would do honour to any Author, however illustrious:—

" What does not Fate? The tower that long had stood
The crashing thunder, and the warring winds,

Shook by the slow, but sure destroyer, Time,
Now hangs in doubtful ruin o'er it's base ;
And flinty pyramids, and walls of brass
Descend. The Babylonian spires are sunk ;
Achaia, Rome, and Egypt moulder down ;
Time shakes the stable tyranny of Thrones,
And tottering Empires sink with their own weight :
This huge rotundity we tread grows old,
And all those worlds that roll around the Sun.
The Sun himself shall die, and ancient Night
Again involve the desolate abyss."

Young is an Author of a very extraordinary character, and certainly of great powers. His imagery is bold and original ; his sentiments expressed with wonderful force and eloquence ; and his versification, although infinitely inferior to the exquisite music of Milton, yet has more of real poetical rhythm in it's composition, than that of most of his contemporaries. His genius, however, is only seen to advantage amidst Charnel houses and sepulchres. When it is employed on lighter subjects, in Satirical or humorous delineations, it is unsuccessful ; it seems as if, like the pictures of the Camera Obscura, it could not be exhibited but in an apparatus of darkness. His Muse is a Mummy ; his Apollo a Sexton ; his Parnassus a Church-yard. He drinks from the River Styx instead of Hippocrene, and mis-

takes the pale horse in the Revelations for Pegasus. The consequence is, that as far as a very large portion of his volume is concerned, it may be very good Divinity, but it is not Poetry.

Goldsmith I have already had occasion to mention several times in the course of these Lectures, as the various classes of English Poetry in which he has written, have come under our review. He now appears before us in the character of a Didactic Poet, and what can I say of him better than by repeating the true and eloquent eulogium in his Epitaph:—

“ Nullum quod tēgit non ornavit ! ”

The “ *Traveller*,” and the “ *Deserted Village* ” scarcely claim any notice from me. They are in every one’s hands ; they live in every one’s memory ; they are felt in every one’s heart. They are daily the delight of millions. The Critic and the Commentator are never asked their opinion upon their merits. “ Song,” says Campbell, “ is but the Eloquence of Truth,” and of this eloquence are the writings of Goldsmith made up. Eloquence that *will* be listened to ; Truth that it is impossible to doubt.

Thomson is the first of our Descriptive Poets ;

I had almost said, the first in the world. He is one of the best Poets, and the worst versifiers, that ever existed. To begin with the least pleasing part of our subject, his versification, it is artificial and elaborate; timid and pompous; deserting simplicity, without attaining dignity. It scorns the earth, without being able to soar into the air. In the best passages of his Poetry, the power and splendour of his thoughts burst through the clouds in which his versification shrouds them; and, like the Sun, impart a portion of their own lightness to that which would obscure them. Strange, that he who had such an eye for Nature, and had a mind teeming with so many simple and beautiful images, should choose language so artificial, in which to describe the one, and express the others. Thomson, when he wrote his "*Castle of Indolence*," could describe as naturally as he felt. The fact seems to be, that the last mentioned Poem was a work of amusement, and the "*Seasons*" a work of labour. Thomson's ideas spring up so naturally and unforced, that he seems to think himself bound to clothe them in a cumbrous and elaborate versification, before he ventures to exhibit them to the world. He could not believe that in their naked simplicity and beauty they were fit for the public gaze. His versification,

however, is but the husk and stalk ; the fruit which grows up with them is of a delicious taste and flavour. Thomson is the genuine child of Nature. He seems equally at home in the sunshine, and in the storm ; in the smiling vallies of Arcadia, and in the icy wastes of Nova Zembla ; amidst the busy hum of mankind, and the solitude and silence of deserts. The following lines present as perfect and well-defined a picture to the eye, as ever was embodied on the canvas :—

“ Home from his morning task the swain retreats,
His flock before him stepping to the fold,
While the full udder'd mother lows around
The cheerful cottage, then expecting food ;
The food of innocence and health. The daw,
The rook, and magpie, to the grey-grown oaks,
That the calm Village in their verdant arms,
Sheltering, embrace, direct their lazy flight ;
Where on the mingling boughs they sit embower'd,
All the hot Noon, till cooler hours arise.
Faint underneath the household fowls convene ;
And in a corner of the buzzing shade,
The house-dog, with the vacant greyhound, lies
Outstretch'd and sleepy.”

Here the versification is less stilted than that of Thomson generally is ; but even here it is loaded with expletives ; such as the “ mingling boughs,” the “ household fowls,” the “ vacant greyhound,”

and the “grey-grown oaks.” Thomson’s epithets are laboured, and encumber, instead of assisting his descriptions. Shakspeare’s, on the contrary, are artless, and seem scarcely sought for ; but every word is a picture. Instance his description of the martlet, building his nest outside of *Macbeth’s* castle :—

“ This guest of Summer,
The temple-haunting Martlet, doth approve,
By his loved mansionry, that the Heaven’s breath
Smells wooingly here.”

Or his description of the infant sons of Edward the Fourth sleeping in the Tower :—

“ Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,
That in their Summer beauty kiss’d each other.”

Again, the following description, in the “ *Seasons*,” of that period of the year when the Winter and the Spring are contending for the mastery, is perfectly true and natural :—

“ As yet the trembling Year is unconfirm’d,
And Winter oft’ at eve resumes the breeze ;
Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets
Deform the day delightless ; so that scarce
The bittern knows his time, with bill ingulph’d

To shake the sounding marsh, or from the shore
The plovers when to scatter o'er the heath,
And sing their wild notes to the listening waste."

But how are the beauty and fidelity of the picture deformed by such harsh inversions and tumid epithets as "day delightless," and "bill ingulphed."

Cowper has not Thomson's genius, but he has much more taste. His range is neither so wide, nor so lofty, but, as far it extends, it is peculiarly his own. He cannot paint the Plague at Carthage, or the Snow-storm, or the Earthquake, as Thomson has done; but place him by the banks of the Ouse, or see him taking his "Winter walk at Noon," or accompany him in his rambles through his Flower garden, and where is the Author who can compare with him for a moment? The pictures of domestic life which he has painted are inimitable. It is hard to say whether his sketches of external nature, or of indoor life, are the best. Cowper does not attempt the same variety of scene as Thomson; but in what he does attempt, he always succeeds. The grander features of Nature are beyond his grasp; mountains and cataracts, frowning rocks, and wide-spreading seas, are not subjects for his pencil: but the meadow and the

hay-field, the gurgling rill, and the flower-crowned porch, he can place before our eyes with astonishing verisimilitude. Sometimes too he takes a flight beyond his ordinary reach; and his personification of Winter is powerful, and even sublime :—

“ Oh Winter! ruler of the inverted year!
Thy scatter'd hair, with sleet-like ashes fill'd,
Thy breath congeal'd upon thy lips, thy cheek
Fringed with a beard made white with other snows
Than those of age, thy forehead wrapt in clouds,
A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
But urged by storms along it's slippery way.

Cowper's minor Poems are full of beauties; and of beauties of the most versatile nature. For pathos and feeling, his lines “ *On his Mother's Picture*” are positively unrivalled. His “ *Review of Schools*,” and his piece entitled “ *Conversation*,” display an acute observation of men and manners, and are replete with the keenest, but at the same time, the most polished Satire; while his “ *John Gilpin*” is a masterpiece of quiet and unforced, but, at the same time, strong and racy humour.

His versification, like Thomson's, is not his best quality; but it's faults are of a totally opposite character. If Thomson fails from too much effort,

Cowper fails from too little. If one is bombastic and turgid, the other is tame and prosaic. English Narrative blank verse is an Instrument which few know how to touch. It is like wielding the bow of Ulysses. Milton, and Milton only, could draw from it all the ravishing harmony which it contained.

LECTURE THE SIXTH.

LYRICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS POETRY.

Ancient Minstrels, Troubadours, and Ballad-Writers:—Abundance and Beauty of the old English Lyrical Poems:—Sir Thomas Wyatt:—Beaumont and Fletcher:—Martin Llewellyn:—Sir Walter Raleigh:—George Herbert:—Translations of the Psalms:—Modern Ballad-Writers:—Modern Odes:—Dryden, Pope, Collins, Gray, Mason, and the Wartons:—Conclusion.

WE have already taken a brief review of English Narrative, Epic, Dramatic, Descriptive, Didactic, Pastoral, and Satirical Poetry. The subject of these Lectures we shall, therefore, now bring to a close by directing our enquiries to English Lyrical and Miscellaneous Poetry.

The value of a Song is a Proverbial saying to express something utterly worthless; and yet it is scarcely too much to assert, that the characters of Nations have been moulded and fixed by their Songs and Ballads; which have not unfrequently been found to be instruments of incalcu-

lable power. “Give me,” said a great Statesman, “the making of the National Ballads, and I care not who makes the Laws.” History presents us with many proofs of the truth and wisdom of this remark. A Minstrel who accompanied William the Conqueror to the Invasion of England, by rushing into the enemy’s ranks, chaunting the Song of Rollo, led on his countrymen to the Victory of Hastings; the Songs of the Welsh Bards inspired such a spirit of resistance to the authority of the English, that Edward the First caused the whole fraternity to be exterminated; which Hume has justly styled a barbarous, but not absurd policy; the air of the “*Ranz des Vaches*” has been forbidden to be played in the bands of the Swiss Regiments on foreign service, because it brought back the scenes of home to their recollections, and inspired them with a resistless wish to return to their native country; and Lord Wharton’s song of “*Lillebulero*,”—immortal as the favourite of Uncle Toby,—is supposed to have had no slight influence in promoting our English Revolution. To cite instances of a more modern date, the “*Marsellois Hymn*” shook the Bourbons from their throne; and Dibdin’s unrivalled Naval Songs were instrumental in quelling the Mutiny at the Nore. Songs and Ballads, too, give us a more certain and faithful

picture of the state of manners and society at the periods in which they were written, than do the more bulky and ambitious works of the historians and chroniclers: as “a straw thrown up into the air will shew which way the wind blows,” while a stone will return to the Earth, without giving us any such intelligence.

Lyrical Poetry is the Parent of all others. Before men learned to construct their verses into artificial and elaborate narratives, or to give them a Dramatic form, they were accustomed to express any ardent emotion, such as Affection, Exultation, or Devotion, by short metrical compositions, which were usually sung, and accompanied by some musical instrument. The praises of their Gods, the achievements of their warriors, and the beauty of their mistresses, are the favourite topics of the Poets in the earliest and rudest stages of society. Hence arose a class of men, whose peculiar province it was to compose and sing verses upon such subjects; men who united the characters of Poet and Minstrel; who were treated with extraordinary respect and reverence, and who could frequently number in their ranks persons of high station, and great power.

The Bards of Druidical time form the earliest class of this character of whom we have any record

in our Island : these have been succeeded by the Saxon Gleemen and Minstrels ; the Provençal Troubadours, and finally, by Poets of a more lofty and enduring reputation.

The Troubadours are the fathers of modern Literature. The Provençal language in which they wrote, was the general language of civilised Europe ; or, at least, of the educated classes of society. At the period at which they flourished, it was very generally spoken in France, Italy, the South of Germany, Flanders, and England. The Poets of those days, however, bore very little resemblance to those secluded and sedentary persons who now rule the world of Literature. They were Warriors and Knights, Earls and Barons, Princes and Kings ; although persons of the lowest stations in society were numbered amongst them, and could claim all the honours and privileges which appertained to the character of the Minstrel ; if they were but accomplished in what was called, *la gaie Science* : but these were also active and perambulatory persons, wandering from City to City, and from Castle to Castle, singing of Love, and War, and Glory. Many of their compositions teem with the most beautiful and original imagery, and are full of expressions of that high sense of honour, courtesy, and devotion to the fair sex, which cha-

racterised the ages of Chivalry. A few specimens of their Poetry, as far as a literal Prose version can be called a specimen, will not be irrelevant to the subject immediately before us. Geoffrey Rudel, whose life was as romantic as that of any Romance which was ever invented, thus unburthens the feelings of his heart:—"All Nature sets me an example of elegance and love. The trees when renewing their leaves, and their fruits, invite me to adorn myself in my gayest apparel. When I behold the Nightingale caressing his faithful mate, who returns his tenderness in every look, and who so delightfully warble their joys in unison, I feel my soul penetrated with delight; I feel my heart melt with tender love. Happy birds! you are still at liberty to express what you feel, while I languish in silence. The Shepherds amuse themselves with their pipes, and Children with their little labours. I alone rejoice not, for distant is the object of my love. Day and night, a thousand tender thoughts transport me to the blest mansions. When, whisper I, my Soul's delight! when shall I meet you there?"

Folquet de Marseilles, who was afterwards, Bishop of Thoulouse, in one of his Poems, also makes use of a very striking and original simile:—

“ I wish only to express my feelings, but to do so would be an unpardonable boldness. How can my heart contain so vast a love! It is like a great tower reflected from a small mirror!”

Bertrand le Bonn, who had been defeated and made prisoner by our heroic Monarch Cœur-de-Lion, then Count of Poitou, who was himself a distinguished Poet, thus addresses his conqueror. “ If Count Richard will vouchsafe me his grace, I will devote myself to his service, and my attachment to him shall be as pure as the finest silver. His high dignity should cause him to resemble the Sea, which seems to retain all she receives within her bosom, but casts it back on the shore. It befits so great a Baron to restore what he has taken, from a vassal who humbles himself before him.”

But it is doing the Troubadour Poets manifest injustice to pretend to give any idea of their merits by a literal Prose version. I will therefore venture to attempt a metrical translation of two short extracts, which struck me as possessing peculiar beauty. The first is from Geoffrey Rudel:—

“ Once on my lip, my bliss to seal,
Thine own a kiss imprest;
And ever since that time I feel
Love's pangs within my breast.

Give me again that kiss so dear,
Which my heart's peace betray'd ;
That kiss which like Achilles' spear,
Can heal the wound it made."

The other is from Folquet de Marseilles; and I should premise that Love and Mercy were supplicated as Divinities among the Troubadours.

" Love! thou hast done me wrong to wage
Thy war within my heart;
Not bringing Mercy to assuage
The rankling of thy dart.
Where Mercy is not, Love is found
A tyrant haught and proud ;
Love, let thy knee salute the ground,
At Mercy's footstool bow'd.

Surely the greatest of the great,
The best among the good,
May bid those powers together mate,
Oh Lady! calm their feud.
That thou can'st blend in union meek,
Things more opposed than they,
The white and red upon thy cheek,
In Love's own language say."

By degrees, however, the Provençal declined into a dead language ; the Poets of Europe made use of the tongues of their own respective countries; and Lyrical and Narrative Poetry became closely

connected. The old English Metrical Romances were composed with a view to a Musical accompaniment; and the old English Ballads, for the most part, contain some narration formed of two or three striking incidents. In the number and beauty of it's ancient Lyrical reliques, this nation is said to be richer than all the rest of Europe combined. The fine old Ballads of "*Chevy Chace*" and "*Sir Cauline and King Estmere*," abound with the most exquisite and original imagery, and with touches of deep and genuine feeling. Of the first, Sir Philip Sidney, no incompetent judge, has said, "I never heard the old song of Percie and Douglas, that I have found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet; and yet it is sung but by some blind crowder, with no rougher voice than rude style; which being so evil apparelled, in the dust and cobweb of that uncivil age, what would it work trimmed in the gorgeous eloquence of Pindar?" "*Old Robin Gray*" also deserves our notice, if it were only on account of these two lines:—

" My Father argued sair, though my Mither didna speak,
But she looked in my face till my heart was like to break."

There is also in "*Lady Ann Bothwell's Lament*,"

a touch of unaffected nature and pathos of the same kind:—

“ Lie still, my darling ! sleep awhile,
And when thou wakest, sweetly smile;
But smile not as thy Father did,
To cozen maids ;—nay, God forbid !”

The early part of the reign of Henry the Eighth was rich in Lyrical Poetry ; and indeed, wore an aspect of great promise to the cause of Literature and the Arts. I am afraid that I shall be venturing a very unpopular opinion, when I say, that I believe these propitious appearances were owing to the influence of Cardinal Wolsey ; for we find the character of the King, and of the nation, materially altered after that distinguished Minister was removed from the Royal Councils. Henry, who during Wolsey’s administration held the balance of Europe, became comparatively powerless and insignificant ; the love of Poetry and the Arts was exchanged for controversial subtleties, and for the more conclusive, if less logical arguments, of the axe, the faggot, and the gibbet ; and thus the budding Spring time of English Literature, which had produced such Poets as Surrey, Wyatt, and Vaux, was nipped untimely by the chilling breath of tyranny. One extract from the

productions of this period is all that I can find room for; and this I shall give not so much on account of any claims to originality, or genius, which it evinces, as for the purpose of shewing the strength and sweetness, which the Authors, even of that early age, infused into their versification. It is by Sir Thomas Wyatt, and is entitled "*An earnest Suit to his Mistress not to forsake him:*"—

“ And wilt thou leave me thus ?
Say nay, say nay, for shame :
To save thee from the blame
Of all my grief and grame,
And wilt thou leave me thus ?
Say nay, say nay.

And wilt thou leave me thus ?
That has loved thee so long,
In wealth and woe among ;
And is thy heart so strong,
As for to leave me thus ?
Say nay, say nay.

And wilt thou leave me thus ?
That hath given thee my heart,
Never for to depart,
Neither for pain or smart :
And wilt thou leave me thus ?
Say nay, say nay.

And wilt thou leave me thus?
And have no more pity
Of him that loveth thee;
Alas! thy cruelty!
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay, say nay."

The age of Queen Elizabeth, however, to which, almost whatever class of Poetry we are discussing, we must revert as the period in which it arrived at it's greatest perfection, is peculiarly rich in Lyrical Poems. From the writings of the early Dramatists alone, we may extract gems "of purest ray serene," whose brightness will shame the most ambitious efforts of subsequent periods. I have already given some extracts from Ben Jonson; who is, perhaps, on the whole, the finest Lyrical Poet in our language. Shakspeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, Lylye, and Heywood, also stand out from among the ranks of the Dramatists, as elegant and accomplished Lyrists; and the following Song, from Beaumont and Fletcher, is evidently the foundation on which Milton built that noble Poetical structure, his "*Il Penseroso*:"—

"Hence! all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights,

In which you spend your folly ;
There's nought in this life sweet,
If men were wise to see't,
But only Melancholy.
Oh ! sweetest Melancholy !
Welcome folded arms, and fixed eyes,
A sigh that piercing, mortifies ;
A look that fasten'd to the ground,
A tongue chain'd up, without a sound ;
Fountain-heads, and pathless groves,
Places which pale Passion loves ;
Moonlight walks, where all the fowls
Are warmly housed, save bats and owls ;
A Midnight bell, a parting groan,
These are the sounds we feed upon :
Then stretch our limbs in a still gloomy valley,
Nothing's so dainty sweet as lovely Melancholy."

The number and beauty of the Lyrical Poems produced in the age of Queen Elizabeth, are such that I cannot attempt to give any adequate notion of them by extracts. Their grand distinguishing features are originality of thought, and elegance of versification. Donne, Sydney, Raleigh, Carew, Herrick, Crashaw, Suckling, Waller, and others, form an unrivalled School of Lyrical Poetry, which existed in this country from the days of Elizabeth to those of Charles : and it is perfectly unaccountable, that, possessing so many gems of

the purest Poetry, the public taste should afterwards have sunk into such a state of utter debasement, as to be gratified by the sickening common-places of Lansdowne, Walsh, and Halifax;—that it should “on that fair mountain leave to feed, to batten on this moor.” I cannot, however, dismiss this part of our subject, without giving an extract or two, which, in pursuance of my plan, shall be taken from such Authors as are least generally known. The first is by Martin Llewellyn:—

“ I felt my heart, and found a flame,
That for relief and shelter came ;
I entertain’d the treacherous guest,
And gave it welcome in my breast :
Poor Celia ! whither wilt thou go,
To cool in streams, or freeze in snow ?
Or gentle Zephyrus entreat,
To chill thy flames, and fan thy heat ?
Perhaps a taper’s fading beams
May die in air, or quench in streams ;
But Love is an immortal fire,
Nor can in air, or ice, expire ;
Nor will that Phoenix be supprest,
But with the ruin of it’s nest.”

My second quotation is from the writings of one, whose achievements and misfortunes have made him sufficiently renowned ; but whose Literary

productions are comparatively unknown. I allude to that Soldier, that Sailor, that Statesman, that Patriot, that Poet, that Hero, Sir Walter Raleigh!

“ THE SILENT LOVER.

Passions are liken'd best to floods and streams,
The shallow murmur, but the deep are dumb;
So, when affection yields discourse, it seems
The bottom is but shallow whence they come;
They that are rich in words must needs discover
They are but poor in that which makes a lover.

Wrong not, sweet Mistress of my heart!
The merit of true passion,
With thinking that he feels no smart,
That sues for no compassion.

Since, if my complaints were not t' approve
The conquest of thy beauty;
It comes not from defect of love,
But fear t' exceed my duty.

For knowing that I sue to serve
A Saint of such perfection,
As all desire, but none deserve
A place in her affection;

I rather choose to want relief,
Than venture the revealing;
Where glory recommends the grief,
Despair disdains the healing.

Silence in love betrays more woe
Than words, though ne'er so witty :
A beggar that is dumb you know,
May challenge double pity.

Then wrong not, dearest to my heart !
My love for secret passion ;
He smarteth most who hides his smart,
And sues for no compassion."

The excitement and partizanship produced by the progress of the Reformation in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, gave a religious tinge to many of the Lyrical writings of that period. Crashaw, who translated Marino's "*Sospetto d' Herode*," is a Lyric Poet of great sweetness and power ; but his writings were not very popular, on account of the religious tenets which he professed being Roman Catholic ; and of his Poems being very deeply imbued with them. The unfortunate Robert Southwell, the Jesuit, was also doomed, not only to find his Poetry neglected, but to lay down his life on account of his Creed ; and this too, during the domination of that boasted advocate of liberality and toleration, Queen Elizabeth. His Works, both Prose and Poetry, are full of deep and original thoughts, which are, in general, charmingly expressed. George Herbert, brother of the

celebrated Edward, Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, was once an Author of great reputation as a devotional Lyrist; but his beauties of thought and diction are so overloaded with far-fetched conceits, and quaintnesses; low, and vulgar, and even indelicate imagery; and a pertinacious appropriation of Scripture language and figure, in situations where they make a most unseemly exhibition, that there is now very little probability of his ever regaining the popularity which he has lost. That there was much, however, of the real Poetical temperament in the composition of his mind, the following lines, although not free from his characteristic blemishes, will abundantly prove:—

“ Sweet Day! so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the Earth and sky;
Sweet dew shall weep thy fall to-night,
For thou must die!

Sweet Rose! whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye;
Thy root is ever in it's grave,
And thou must die!

Sweet Spring! full of sweet days and roses,
A box, where sweets compacted lie;
My Music shews you have your closes,
And all must die!

Only a sweet and virtuous Soul,
Like season'd timber never gives,
But when the whole world turns to coal
Then chiefly lives."

Francis Quarles is an Author of the same stamp ; with a fine genius, but the vilest taste in the world. His writings are full of powerful effort, ill directed. His Poetry, in all it's faults and merits, is well illustrated by his engravings. There is much of what Artists call good intention in both, but never was good intention so marred in the execution. His Poetry is not more like Milton's, than his pictures are like Raffaele's ; yet both are full of originality and power : the mere chippings and parings of his genius, combined with a little taste and judgment, would have been sufficient to have formed either an Artist, or a Poet, of no ordinary rank.

The Odes and Choruses of Milton are perhaps the most perfect Lyrics in our language. The "*Hymn on the Nativity*," beginning, " It was the Winter wild ;" the lines "*On a solemn Music*,"—"Blest pair of Syrens ! pledges of Heaven's joy !" and the Choruses of "*Sampson Agonistes*," are altogether matchless. Like all the writings of Milton, they are remarkable for their union of the sublimity and daring of the Greek

Poets, with the holy fervour and sanctity of the Scriptural writers. He is, as it were, Isaiah and Pindar combined. He soars on the pinions of the Theban Eagle, yet his lips seem touched with the same coal of fire from the Altar, as were those of the inspired Prophet of Israel.

Of all Authors, ancient or modern, who have been subjected to the inflictions of Translators, certainly the Royal Psalmist, David, has been treated with the greatest indignity; for, in no language in Europe, has justice been done to him. He has been *traduced* into French, overturned into Dutch, and done into English, with equal beauty and felicity. In our own country, the Psalms, like every thing else appertaining to the Church, seem to be considered Parish property, and to be under the control of a Select Vestry; every vestige of genius, or Poetry, in them, is therefore most carefully picked out, lest they should interfere with the popularity of the Verses of that most ancient and respectable parochial officer, the bellman! The words which are feloniously attributed to the “sweet singer of Israel,” might, with greater probability, be considered the authorship of the Parish Clerk, who drawls them out; or of the Charity Children, who lend their most “sweet voices” to grace them with appropriate melody.

It is, certainly, most extraordinary, that a work which is worthy of the highest Poetical powers of any age, or of any country, should hitherto have been generally abandoned to the ignorant, the incapable, and the presumptuous. But the truth is, that so long as the purposes of Public worship are exclusively kept in view, and the Translator is confined to the drawling long, and short Metres, the straight waistcoats of Verse, which are now used, it will be impossible to infuse into any English version, the power and feeling, the spirit and energy, of the originals. It is obvious that many of these Psalms are *not* fitted for public use; and that the variety of their subjects, requires an equal variety of Metre. Some of them breathe all the ardour of triumph; some, all the dejection of humility; some are sweet and gentle Pastorals; others are grand and melancholy Songs, which are fit to be warbled only amidst the scenes which they describe; in solitude, and captivity, amidst danger and distress; by the rivers of Babylon, and among the tents of Kedar.

One Translator has had the conscience to render a part of that fine Lyric, the 137th Psalm, which runs thus, "If I forget thee, Oh Jerusalem! may my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not re-

member thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!" in the following manner:—

“ If I forget thee ever,
Then let me prosper never,
But let it cause
My tongue and jaws
To cling and cleave together!”

William Slatyer published, in 1642, the “ *Songs of Sion, or certain Psalms of David, set to strange Tunes, and rendered into a strange Tongue.*” Of the Tunes, I can say nothing; but the tongue is strange enough. For instance, a part of the 6th and 7th Verses of the 52d Psalm,—“ The righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him: Lo! this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches!” is thus versified:—

“ The righteous shall his sorrow scan,
And laugh at him, and say, behold!
What has become of this here man,
That on his riches was so bold!”

Archbishop Parker, in the year 1564, printed a Version of the entire book of Psalms, for private circulation, which was never published; but a copy

which has fallen into my hands, does not say much for the Most Reverend Prelate's Poetical talents. His version of the 1st verse of the 125th Psalm will suffice as a specimen of the entire Volume. The Prose translation is as follows:—"They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever:" which the Archbishop versifies thus:—

" Who sticketh to God in stable trust,
As Sion mount he stands full just;
Which moveth no whit, nor yet can reel,
But standeth for ever, as stiff as steel."

Other parts of the Scriptures have scarcely suffered less at the hands of versifiers than the Psalms; for, in the reign of Edward the Sixth, Dr. Christopher Tye turned the whole "*Acts of the Apostles*" into rhyme. His Metre is something like that of Mr. Moore's Song of "Fly from the world, Oh Bessy, to me!" and the Reverend Doctor begins his task thus:—

" In the former Epistle to thee,
Dear friend Theophilus,
I have written the veritie
Of the Lord Christ Jesus!"

Such, as Lord Byron truly said, are some of the Authors, who,—

“ Break into Verse the Gospel of St. Luke,
Or boldly pilfer from the Pentateuch ;
And, undisturb'd by conscientious qualms,
Pervert the Prophets, and purloin the Psalms !”

One of the earliest complete versions of the Psalms, and, perhaps, with all it's faults,—for, alas ! we have but a choice of evils,—one of the best, is that of Sternhold and Hopkins. It is by far the most faithful version ; and, although in the effort to be scrupulously literal, the Authors have so often fallen into absurdity, and bathos, yet there are a few Psalms which are rendered into English with real poetical beauty, and feeling. Those which have the signature N affixed to them, are by far the best. They are the production of Thomas Norton, who was, jointly with Lord Buckhurst, Author of the old Play of “ *Gorbuduc*,” which we have had occasion to mention several times in the course of these Lectures, as the first regular English Tragedy. The version of Tate and Brady is really beneath our notice. All the absurdities of Sternhold and his coadjutors, are preferable to this dull, sleepy, prosaic transmutation of some of the most magnificent Poems in the

world. That of Dr. Watts, however respectable, is not, and does not affect to be, a translation. It is a commentary, or an exposition of the Author's own views and fancies; and, however acceptable to those who coincide in his opinions, is worse than nothing, as a faithful and correct version of the Psalms. Perhaps, after all, the genius of the two languages, Hebrew and English, is so adverse, that it is not likely that any Metrical imitation can give an adequate idea of the original. The fine Prose version of the Translators of the Bible, is certainly infinitely more Poetical than any attempt which has yet been made at Versification.

Lyrical Poetry, like almost all other Poetry, except the Comic Drama, seems to have made a dead stop at the Restoration. The Love Songs, Pastoral Songs, Sentimental Songs, Loyal Songs, and Devotional Songs, which were then produced, now call upon us for no other expression of our sentiments and opinions, but that of peace be with their ashes! The stream from which those Poets drank was Lethe, and not Helicon; a wreath of poppy and nightshade, instead of laurel and bays, has now settled quietly on their brows; and the Critical resurrectionist who would raise them from the oblivious grave in which they are so peacefully inurned, would deserve a sentence

of outlawry in all the Courts of Parnassus. Dryden is a solitary, but a magnificent, exception. His two splendid Odes on St. Cecilia's Day will last as long as the language in which they are written. The Second, entitled "*Alexander's Feast*," is unquestionably the finest Ode in our language. Pope's on the same subject sinks infinitely in the comparison. It is certainly not without merit; but Pope's pinions, strong and vigorous as they were, were not peculiarly adapted for Pindaric flights. Rowe, who has shewn his taste, if not his honesty, in directing his attention to our old English writers, has thus truly and energetically characterised the Authors of the ancient Ballads:—

" Those venerable ancient Song enditers,
Soar'd many a pitch beyond our modern writers;
With rough, majestic strength they touch'd the heart,
And Truth and Nature made amends for Art."

His own Poems are very pleasing imitations of the ancient Lyrists, and may be said to have given rise to the School of Modern Ballad Writers; in which may be numbered Tickell,—whose fine and feeling "*Elegy on the death of Addison*," is very superior to the general tone of English Poetry at that period;—Mallet, Mickle, Glover,—of whose

Ballad of "*Hosier's Ghost*," Sheridan declared he would rather be the Author than of the *Annals* of Tacitus,—Gay, Percy, and Goldsmith. From such well known works as "*Colin and Lucy*," "*William and Margaret*," "*Edwin and Emma*," "*Black-Eyed Susan*," the "*Friar of Orders Grey*," and "*Edwin and Angelina*," it would be idle for me to adduce any extracts. They form a very agreeable variety in our Literature, and combine much of the native beauty and feeling of the ancient Ballad, with the more polished versification of modern times.

I cannot, however, close this part of my subject without observing that there are several highly gifted Ballad writers now living; especially Mr. Coleridge, whose "*Genevieve*" and the "*Ancient Mariner*," are two of the most magnificent productions in our language.

Gray for a long time held undivided empire in the world of English Lyrical Poetry. Mason said of him:—

" No more the Grecian Muse unrivall'd reigns,
To Britain let the Nations homage pay;
She boasts a Homer's fire in Milton's strains,
A Pindar's rapture in the Lyre of Gray!"

and the public eagerly echoed the sentiment.

Milton still continues in undisputed possession of the Epic Supremacy, but the Lyrical crown of Gray was swept away at one fell swoop by the ruthless arm of Dr. Johnson. That the Doctor's celebrated critique was unduly severe, must be admitted; but the stern censor had truth on his side, nevertheless. There is more of Art than Nature in Gray; more of recollection than invention; more of acquirement than genius. If I may use a colloquial illustration, I should say, that the marks of the tools are too evident on all that he does. I do not object to effort and labour being exercised on that which is intended for the public eye; but the highest effort, and the most successful labour, are those which produce the effects without exhibiting the means. Who can doubt but that the works of Milton were the result of long, and painful, and elaborate labour; but the only evidence of that labour is the perfection to which they are wrought. In Milton we see the Poet; in Gray, the Verse constructor. In Milton we see the stately edifice reared; in Gray, the materials brought together for it's erection. One shews us the palette, and the canvas, and the brush; the other shews us the Picture; the production of the Master mind, without whose informing genius, the palette, and the can-

vas, and the brush, are but idle and worthless toys.

Collins is, next to Jonson, Milton, and Dryden, the finest Lyrical Poet which England has produced. Elegance, delicacy, refinement, pathos, sublimity, all are his. Had health of body, and sanity of mind been preserved to him, I know scarcely any English Poet by whom he would have been surpassed. But, as an Author, whom I have not yet named in these Lectures, but for whom, with all his faults, I take this opportunity of testifying my admiration, Churchill, has said,—

“ By curious Art the brain too finely wrought,
Preys on itself, and is destroy'd by thought.”

Such was the fate of Collins; the most accomplished Scholar, and the most original Poet of his age. His misfortunes, however, survived him; for his Epitaph was written by Hayley, who bore about as much resemblance to him, “ as I to Hercules.”

Mason, and the Wartons, are the latest Lyrical Poets, whom it will be consistent with my plan to mention. The first was certainly a man of considerable talent. His “ *Elfrida*” and “ *Caractacus*,” notwithstanding the trammels in which he

voluntarily chose to involve himself, shew much dramatic power, and the Choruses in the last, particularly that beginning “Hark! heard ye not yon footstep dread?” venture almost on the pathless regions of sublimity. The Wartons, particularly Thomas Warton, were men of cultivated minds, and refined taste, but to original genius they had no pretensions.

And now, “my task is done, my labour is complete.” For the attention which I have been fortunate enough to command, I am indebted to the nature of the subject on which I have been speaking. The situations of the Painter and the Critic are singularly contrasted. In the one instance, the canvas derives all its importance from the Artist; in the other, the Artist derives all his importance from the canvas. The canvas on which I have been employed, has been the merits of the Poets of England; of those illustrious men who, more than her Monarchs, her Statesmen, or her Warriors,—great as they confessedly have been,—will transmit her fame to the most distant climes, and the remotest generations. The works of man’s hand often perish before that hand has mouldered in the dust; but the vast productions of his mind are immortal as that mind itself. Even now we see how far the genius of England has extended

beyond her territorial limits. Language is the type of ideas, and the medium by which they are expressed. Louis the Fourteenth boasted, that he had made French the language of Europe; but, when we remember, that English is not only the language of these realms, and their dependencies in the four quarters of the world; but also of another mighty Empire beyond the wide Atlantic; and of the hundred realms of Hindoostan; and of that insular continent, which may be called the fifth division of the globe; and, moreover, that, for the purposes of Commerce, or of Literature, or by means of Religious Missionaries, it has been, more or less, introduced into almost every Realm, and State, and Territory, on the face of the earth, we may then, indeed, venture to call it the language of the World! This Language is that mighty engine which our Poets have subdued to themselves; and on which they have stamped the impress of their own unrivalled genius: this is that flood which shall spread over the whole World; and when the dynasties of the present period, and the “cloud capt towers, and the gorgeous palaces,” and the political Institutions, and the customs, and modes, and manners, which now prevail, shall sink beneath it, like the Cities and Mountains of the antediluvian world; the genius

of England, like the Ark of old, shall float proudly and securely on it's bosom, and survive to delight new eras, and form the taste and manners of Nations yet unborn.

END OF THE LECTURES.

TALES, POEMS, &c.

PRINTED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS.

Th' Earth o' the grave hath stopt his hearing, Sir ;
And praise and blame are now alike to him :
Yet, though his ear be dull, and his heart cold,
And all Fame's aspirations quench'd in death,
Still let these reliques bear a charmed life,
And speak, though he be silent.

OLD PLAY.

THE GARTER.

A ROMANCE OF ENGLISH HISTORY.

“ Honi soit qui Mal y pense.”

ENGLAND resumed her ascendancy over Scotland soon after Edward the Third had commenced that brilliant reign which was destined to attract the eyes of all Europe towards him. Nature and Fortune seemed to have concurred in distinguishing this Prince from all other monarchs. He was very tall, but well shaped ; and of so noble and majestic an aspect, that his very looks commanded esteem and veneration. His conversation was easy, and always accompanied with gravity and discretion. He was affable and obliging, benevolent and condescending ; and although the most renowned Prince, Warrior, and Statesman, of the age in which he lived, his manners and conduct were courteous, unaffected, and even humble. His heart,

filled with visions of glory, was as yet ignorant of a passion with which few men know how to combat ; and which is equally the source of the greater part of all the virtues, and vices, of humanity : young Edward was unacquainted with love. He only aspired to resume those conquests, which had escaped from the feeble grasp of his unhappy Father. He burned with the desire of subjecting a neighbouring kingdom, the conquest of which had ever been a favourite project of England. Robert Bruce was in his grave ; and his successor, although he inherited his courage, did but hasten the destruction of the Scottish monarchy.

The English Monarch was served by men who were worthy of their master. William Montacute had fought with distinction and success, against the French and Scots, and raised by the king to the rank of Earl of Salisbury, he desired nothing but the continuance of his Sovereign's favour ; which Edward confirmed, by engaging the Baron de Grandison, one of his Ministers, to give his eldest daughter to him in marriage.

Katharine de Grandison had not yet appeared at Court, but lived in seclusion and solitude at her Father's castle in Gloucestershire. To a tall and stately form, and a majestic gait, she added the most sylph-like grace, and lightness of figure.

Her features were of that classical symmetry, and faultless beauty, which we so often see in the Greek statues, and sigh over as if they were only the dreams of the inspired. Her face was exquisitely fair ; her eyes of an intense blue ; and her voice surpassingly rich, powerful, and melodious. The accomplishments, both mental and acquired, with which she was endowed, were of as high an order as those of her person ; and to both, she united a sweetness and gentleness of disposition, which made her the idol of all who were acquainted with her.

Her Father, the Lord de Grandison, was of a lofty and imperious character. Neither very mild, or, what has been in modern times called amiable, he had a stern and inflexible spirit of justice, and probity. Incapable of sycophancy, although he resided at Court, and adoring his Sovereign without being able to degrade himself to the rank of a flatterer, he would gladly have sacrificed his life for the King, but his honour was dearer to him even than Edward. Next to the Monarch, and the state, the object to which he was most attached was his daughter ; and he lost no time in acquainting Katharine with the wishes of his Master, who demanded her hand for the Earl of Salisbury. The Father did not observe the Daughter's emo-

tion, but retired, convinced that he should be obeyed, and that she knew no other law than her parent's will. He had, however, not long quitted the apartment before her younger sister Alice entered it, and found her bathed in tears. "Sweet Sister," said Alice, "what mean these tears?"

"Alas!" returned the lady Katharine, "I am no longer to be mistress of myself. Thy love, and my Father's protection, were all I wished to form my happiness; and I am now about to pass under the yoke of a husband, whom I have never seen, nor ever wish to see."

It was in vain that Alice endeavoured to impress upon her Sister's mind the advantages which would attend her union with King Edward's favourite. "It is true," she replied, "that the Earl of Salisbury stands high in the favour of the greatest Monarch in Europe. But hast thou ever seen the King, Alice? Is *he* not worthy of the homage of all mankind? Lives there any one who can so irresistibly command our respect, our veneration, our love? I beheld him but once, at an entertainment to which my Father accompanied me: but one glance was sufficient! Oh! how happy will that Princess be who calls him husband!"

At these words the young lady paused, and blushed; yet notwithstanding such very unpromising

symptoms, the day for the nuptials was immediately fixed; as the old Lord never dreamed of asking his Daughter if his own, and the King's choice were agreeable to her. The Abbey of Westminster was chosen for the celebration; the Primate performed the ceremony; the King gave away the bride; and Katharine, accompanied by her husband, and her Sister, proceeded to spend the honeymoon at the Earl's Castle of Wark, in Northumberland. His Lordship had not, however, many weeks enjoyed the society of his beautiful wife, before he was summoned to attend the Earl of Suffolk on a war-like expedition to Flanders; on which occasion his usual good fortune for the first time forsook him. Both the Earls were defeated in the first battle in which they engaged; and were sent prisoners to the Court of France, until they could be either ransomed, or exchanged.

This piece of intelligence was communicated to the lady Katharine at the same time with another, by which she learned that King Edward had been solemnly betrothed to the lady Philippa of Hainault. The Treaty for this Marriage gave general and unmixed pleasure to all his subjects; the Count of Hainault, the lady's Father, being one of the most powerful allies of England on the Continent,

who had been mainly instrumental in rescuing it from the tyranny of Mortimer, Earl of March, and the old Queen Isabella, and thus securing the Crown for Edward the Third. The Lord de Grandison, in particular, was delighted by the prospect of an union between the houses of England and Hainault; but no sooner was this news communicated to the Countess of Salisbury, than she was overwhelmed with the most poignant sorrow. Whether the Earl's captivity, or the King's marriage, had the greatest share in causing it, we must leave our fair readers to determine.

"Why, my sweet Katharine," said Alice, "why do you take the Earl's captivity so much to heart? the Court of France must be the most agreeable prison in the world. There he will find every thing to solace him in his misfortunes, and enable him to sustain his separation from you."

"Let him forget me; let him cease to love me; 'tis no matter!" sighed the Countess.

"You deceive me, Katharine," said Alice; "you conceal something from me; for it is impossible that the capture which has placed your Lord in the hands of generous and magnanimous foes, can be the occasion of so deep a grief as yours."

“ True, true, my sweet Alice,” said the Countess, throwing herself in her Sister’s arms; “ I am the most wretched of women; I love——”

“ The Earl!” said Alice.

“ The King!” said Katharine; hiding her face in her Sister’s bosom.

“ Ha!” said the latter, “ what is’t I hear? I am your friend, your Sister, Katharine, and would fain administer to your peace; but whither will this fatal passion lead you?”

“ To death, sweet Alice! to death! or, at least, to a life made miserable by the consciousness of nursing in my heart a sentiment, to which honour and virtue are alike opposed. And I have a rival, Alice! Oh! save me, save me from myself! Speak to me of Salisbury, of my husband! of his renown, his truth, his valour! and I will forget this King, whose conquests cannot be bounded by France and Scotland, but must include even the affections of his subjects.”

The heart of Katharine was tender and susceptible, but bold and firm; and in the society of her Sister, and in the active discharge of the various duties devolving upon her elevated rank, she endeavoured to repress that fatal passion, which the recent intelligence had strengthened to a height, almost bordering upon insanity.

In the meantime, King Edward openly declared war against the Scots ; who, instead of waiting to be attacked, resolved to become themselves the assailants, and, with a large army, invaded England ; ravaged the northern counties ; attacked Newcastle ; took and burned the City of Durham ; and finally, laid siege to Wark Castle, which was left to the defence of the Countess of Salisbury, Sir William Montacute, the son of her Husband's sister, and a very slender garrison. This heroic Lady, however, by her beauty and firmness, inspired all with courage, and devotion to her cause ; though the assault of the enemy was too fierce and unremitting for them to hope long to defend the Castle, without assistance from King Edward ; which Sir William Montacute volunteered to obtain. " I know your loyalty and heartiness, as well as your affection for the Lady of this house," said the gallant Knight to the beleagured garrison ; " and so, out of my love for her, and for you, I will risque my life in endeavouring to make the King acquainted with our situation ; when I doubt not to be able to bring back with me such succour as will effectually relieve us."

This speech cheered both the Countess and her defenders ; and at midnight Sir William left the fortress, happily unobserved by the Scots. It

was so pitiless a storm, that he passed through their army without being noticed ; until about day break, when he met two Scotsmen, half a league from their camp, driving thither some oxen. These men Sir William attacked, and wounded very severely ; killed the cattle that they might not carry them to their army ; and then said to them, “ Go and tell your leader, that William Montacute has passed through his troops, and is gone to seek succour from the King of England, who is now at Berwick ;” which intelligence being speedily communicated to the King of Scotland, he lost no time in raising the siege, and retreating towards the frontier.

Within a very few hours, King Edward arrived to the relief of the garrison, and proceeded to pay his respects to the Countess ; who went to meet him at the Castle-gates, and there gave him her thanks for his assistance. They entered the Castle hand in hand ; and the King kept his eyes so continually upon her, that the gentle dame was quite abashed : after which, he retired to a window, where he fell into a profound reverie ; and, as Froissart tells us, upon the Countess enquiring the subject of his thoughts, and whether it was public business on which he mused, the King replied, “ Other affairs, Lady, touch my heart more nearly ;

for in truth, your perfections have so surprised and affected me, that my happiness depends on my meeting from you a return to that love with which my bosom burns, and which no refusal can extinguish."

"Sire," replied the Countess, "do not amuse yourself by laughing at me; for I cannot believe, that you mean what you have just said; or, that so noble and gallant a Prince would think of dishonouring me, or my Husband, who now is in prison on your account."

The Lady then quitted the King; who, after passing the whole of that day, and a restless and sleepless night, at the Castle; at dawn the next morning departed in chase of the Scots. Upon taking leave of the Countess, he said, "Dearest Lady, God preserve you! Think well of what I have said, and give me a kinder answer." Her reply to which solicitation was, however, similar to all the former, though Edward would have been amply revenged for the rejection of his suit, had he possessed the keen eyes of Alice de Grandison; for to their piercing scrutiny, her Sister's heart, with all the storm of passions by which it was agitated, was laid entirely open. "Alice," she said, "it is too true; I do not love alone! Edward returns my fatal passion. But my mind is fixed. I will

behold him no more. Would to Heaven that my Husband were here !”

As she uttered these words the Countess sunk into the arms of Alice ; and almost at that moment, she received a letter from the Earl. “ Heaven be praised !” said she, “ Salisbury is on his return ; and his arrival will alike prevent the King, and me, from nursing a sentiment which ought to be stifled in it’s birth.” Upon the old Lord de Grandison’s arrival on a visit to his daughter, he failed not to observe the profound sorrow in which she was plunged ; “ Butrejoice, Katharine !” said he, “ your Husband will soon be here. By an arrangement between King Edward and the Courts of France and Scotland, he has been exchanged for the Earl of Moray. Check, then, this immoderate grief ; Salisbury has suffered defeat, but it is without disgrace.”

The Countess felt all the pangs of conscious guilt, when she heard her Father attribute her grief to the absence of her Husband. “ Oh, my Father !” she said, when left to the companionship of her own painful thoughts, “ even thee too, do I deceive ! I am the betrayer of all who surround me ; and dare I meet the gaze of Salisbury ? Alas ! my misfortune and my crime are traced in indelible characters upon my brow.”

Edward on his return to his capital, though surrounded by the most dazzling splendour, and the most enticing pleasures, could not chase from his mind the image of the Countess; and, unable any longer to bear her absence, he wrote to the Lord de Grandison commanding him to bring his daughter to Court, for the purpose of awaiting the speedy arrival of her Husband. “My Father,” said she, as soon as the old Lord had communicated to her the royal command, “will not the Earl come hither to me?”

“Katharine!” answered De Grandison, “the slightest wishes of the King it is our imperative duty to obey.”

“My Lord, if you knew—I am a stranger to the capital; does it not abound with dangers? Is there not—?”

“Nay, nay, my child; you have wisdom, education, and virtuous example to protect you. Once more, your Father and your King command you; and you must accompany me.”

De Grandison then made the necessary preparations for his own return to the Metropolis; and the Countess, under the pretext of indisposition, was able to delay her own journey but for a short period. News from her Father, however, speedily informed her of her Husband’s arrival, and this

was quickly followed by a letter from Salisbury himself, full of the most passionate expressions of attachment, and urging her immediate presence. To both these she answered by a plea of continued illness; and to the latter, added an earnest entreaty that her lord would himself come to Wark Castle, where she had matter of importance to communicate to him; being resolved to explain the cause of her reluctance to visit London, and, confidentially to acquaint the Earl with the solicitations of the King.

This last letter had remained unanswered for a considerable time; and the Countess feared that she had given offence to both her Husband and her Father, when at length a messenger arrived from London. The Countess snatched his paquet from his hand, and eagerly perused it; it was from her Father, and ran thus:—

“ My dearest Daughter,

“ The moment has arrived when you must arm yourself with all that fortitude which you have inherited from me. True grandeur resides in our own souls; that which we derive from fortune vanishes with the other illusions, of which this life is compounded. You were anxiously expecting your Husband; and he was about to receive further honours from his master; but the King of Kings

has decreed that Salisbury should not live to enjoy the bounty of his Monarch. A sudden illness has just removed him from this world.

“ Your affectionate Father,

“ DE GRANDISON.”

The decease of the Earl of Salisbury was deeply lamented by the Countess. Gallant, generous, and affectionate, he had won her esteem; and had she had an opportunity of knowing him longer, might have gained her love. Her delicacy too, loaded her with self-reproaches, from which she did not attempt to escape; and made her feel the loss she had sustained still more acutely. “ I will repair my crime,” she said; “ I will revenge the manes of Salisbury. The King, although affianced, and by proxy espoused, to Philippa of Hainault, will renew his suit to me; but he shall learn that esteem and duty are sometimes as powerful as love itself.”

By the death of the gallant Earl, King Edward found himself deprived of one of the main supporters of his crown; and he regretted him not less as an useful citizen, of whom the nation was justly proud, than as a loyal servant, who was sincerely attached to his master. Love, nevertheless, mingled with the King's regrets; since he could not but be sensible that he was now without a

rival; and that the Countess was free from a constraint, which had hitherto separated them from each other. The Earl died without children; and the Law compelled his Widow to renounce the territorial possessions which were attached to the title, and which now reverted to the Crown. This event, therefore, rendered her presence in London unavoidable; and, on her arrival in the Metropolis, her father, desirous to relieve her from the melancholy in which she was plunged, wished to introduce her at Court, and present her to the King. This proposal, however, met her firm refusal. "What is it that you propose to me, my Lord?" said she; "ere these mourning habiliments are well folded round me, would you have me parade them in solemn mockery at the foot of the Throne? Never! Leave me, I conjure you, my Lord; leave me to solitude and silence; to forgetfulness and despair!"

De Grandison wished not to constrain the inclinations of his daughter; and upon communicating the reasons of her absence, the King affected to be satisfied with them. He had, however, communicated his passion, which he did not choose to avow to honest courtiers, to Sir William Trussell, one of the most artful intriguers, and insinuating sycophants about his Court; who, anxious only to

secure his place in the King's favour, had encouraged him in the prosecution of this amour, and recommended him to use stratagem, and even violence, should it be necessary towards the attainment of his object.

“The ingrate!” said the King, when he found himself alone with Trussell; “she refuses me even the innocent gratification of beholding her. I ask but an interview; I wish but to look upon her beauty; and she refuses to grant me even this niggardly boon, for all that she has made me suffer.”

“My Liege,” said Trussell, “it is compromising your honour and your dignity, to submit to such audacity. The daughter of de Grandison ought to feel but too much flattered that King Edward deigns to bestow a glance, or a thought, upon her. Her husband is in the tomb; she is free from all restraint; and you have tendered your love: what is it that she opposes to your offer? Her virtue! Is not obedience virtue? Is not compliance the first duty of subjects to their Sovereign? My Liege, this daughter of de Grandison hides intrigue under the name of virtue. Your Grace has a rival.”

“Ha!” said Edward, while his lip quivered, and his whole gigantic frame trembled like an

aspen leaf; "by Heaven, thou hast it, Trussell! Fool that I was to feign that delicacy and reserve, for which this haughty minion now despises me! Fly to her, then; demand an audience, and command her to appear at Court; tell her that I will brook no answer but compliance."

Trussell hastened to execute the Monarch's orders; and the King, left to himself, began to ponder on the course which he was pursuing. "I have yielded, then," said he, "to the fiend's suggestions; and thus abased myself to a level with the weakest, and most despicable, of mankind. I am preparing to play the tyrant with my subjects, and my first victim is an unhappy woman; whose only crime is the obstinacy with which she repels my unworthy addresses. Hither!" he added, clapping his hands, and immediately one of his pages stood before him; "hasten after Sir William Trussell: bid him attend me instantly."

"Trussell," said the King, as he returned, equipped for the errand he was about to undertake, "I have consulted my heart; I have held communion with myself; and I have learned, that it befits not Edward of England to employ force or artifice to achieve the conquest of the heart of Katharine: I will vanquish her obstinacy by other means."

“What, my Liege!” said Trussell, “will you then submit ——?”

“To any thing, rather than suffer the Countess of Salisbury to accuse me of despotism.”

“In your Grace’s place ——” said Trussell.

“In *my* place,” interrupted Edward, “you would act as I do; I wish to shew, that I possess the soul, as well as the station of a King. Katharine of Salisbury shall not be the victim of my caprice. Go; and, in future, give me only such counsel as shall be worthy of both of us.”

The King congratulated himself on this heroic effort; and it was one which cost him many pangs: nor was the Countess without her struggles, and her anxieties; for, while the image of her lost husband was hourly becoming more effaced from her heart, that of the King was more deeply engraven there than ever. She received many letters from him, but answered none; and the pride of the royal lover began to take fire again at the neglect and contumely with which his mistress treated his addresses: whilst Trussell used every means of nourishing this feeling, and of insinuating that both the Father and Daughter were anxious only to enhance the price, at which the virtue of the latter was to be bartered.

De Grandison, who began to think that his

daughter carried her grief for her Husband to an extravagant and immoderate height, now remonstrated with her, somewhat impetuously, on her absence from the Court.

“Do you think,” said he, “that I will willingly behold you in a state of eternal widowhood? or that I will suffer you to fail in the respect and duty which we owe the King? Is there a Monarch in the world so worthy of his subjects’ love? of his subjects’ hearts?”

“Alas!” said the Countess, “who can feel more deeply than I do, how much we are indebted to him! But take care, my Father, that he performs the contract for which his royal word and your own are irrevocably given. See that he weds, and that speedily, Philippa de Hainault.”

“Wherefore should I doubt that he will do so?” said de Grandison. “Is he not pledged, in the face of all Europe, to become her husband? and was I not the bearer of his promise to the Earl of Hainault to that effect?”

“He will never wed her, my Father,” said the Countess; “you are yourself witness that from day to day he defers the marriage, on the most frivolous pretexts.”

“Nay, nay, sweet Katharine,” said the old Lord, “wherefore should you take so much inte-

rest in this marriage? This is but a stratagem to put me from my suit. I am going this evening to attend the King; you must accompany me."

"Pardon me, my dearest Father; pardon me, but I cannot go."

"I entreat, I command you," said de Grandison. "I have too long permitted your disobedience and now——"

"Father! behold me a suppliant on my knees before you! defer, but for a few days defer this visit to the Court; and then I will obey you."

"What means this emotion, Katharine?" said her Father; "I find it difficult to refuse you any thing. Do not forget, however, that the delay which I grant must be but a short one; in three days you must accompany me."

This interview, however, which the Baron had been unable to effect, either by his commands, or his entreaties, he at last managed to accomplish by a stratagem. He persuaded his daughter to consent to accompany him to a Masqued Ball, to which she had been invited by the Countess of Suffolk, at her seat, a few miles distant from London; and the fair and noble widow no sooner made her appearance among the assembled company, than every eye was fixed upon her. Her tall and stately, yet graceful figure, glided down

the rooms like a visitant from another sphere, when an unfortunate accident completely disconcerted her. A Mask, richly dressed, had long followed her through all the apartments ; when, as she was endeavouring with some embarrassment to escape from his pursuit, by hurrying to a vacant seat, her Garter dropped upon the floor ! The Mask eagerly stooped down and seized it, and she as eagerly, instantly demanded it's restoration.

“ Nay, gentle Madam,” said he, “ this is a prize too precious to be lightly parted with, and I——”

“ Discourteous Knight !” said the lady, “ know you whom you treat with so much indignity ?” and at these words she removed the mask from her face, hoping thus to awe her persecutor into acquiescence. Her surprise, however, was equal to that of any one present, when her tormentor, removing his own visor, discovered the features of King Edward ! The Lady sank on her knee before the Monarch, and the whole company followed her example.

“ Behold !” cried the King, holding up the ravished Garter, “ a treasure, of the possession of which I own myself unworthy ; yet will I not part with it, for any ransom wealth or power can offer.” An ill-suppressed burst of laughter followed this speech. “ *Honi soit qui Mal y pense !*” exclaimed

the King. "Laugh on, my Lords and Gentlemen! but in good time the merriest of ye, aye, and the greatest Sovereigns of Europe, shall be proud to wear this Garter." Thus saying, the King whispered a few words to the Countess, which seemed to occasion her considerable embarrassment; and then, making a lowly obeisance, left the apartment.

The declaration which he had that night made, he shortly afterwards accomplished, by instituting the far renowned order of the Garter; which, with the ceremonies and entertainments consequent upon it, for some time occupied the almost undivided attention of King Edward. His love for the Countess of Salisbury was, however, now openly avowed; and the arrival of the Princess Philippa, to whom he had already been married by proxy, was delayed in consequence of his not sending the necessary escort. The people soon began to murmur at this delay, since not only the honour of the King, but of the nation also, was concerned in keeping faith with the Count of Hainault, whose alliance was of such vital importance to the interests of England. It was at this juncture that the Lord de Grandison presented himself to the King, and demanded a private audience.

"I have letters, my Liege," said the Baron, "from the Count of Hainault, who bitterly com-

plains of the delay in executing the treaty, with the conclusion of which your Grace was pleased to honour me."

At these words the King changed colour, which the Baron was not slow in observing, as he continued, "wherefore, my Liege, should this intelligence displease you? I perceive in your glance traces of indifference, and even of dislike, towards this union, which all England expects with such impatience."

"De Grandison," said Edward, "Kings are formed of the same materials as other men: they have hearts, and mine is consumed by a passion, which makes me sensible that rank and power are not happiness."

"What, my Liege! have your eyes betrayed your heart to another object? can you forswear your royal word? Honour, fame, policy, all forbid it; all conspire to hasten your marriage with the Lady Philippa."

"If you knew the Beauty of my own Court, who has inspired my passion, my Lord, you would not press this subject."

"I know nothing but your Grace's interest and honour," said de Grandison. "Pardon my frankness, but there can be no motive of sufficient weight to occasion any further delay."

“ No motive, Lord de Grandison?”, said Edward, and he sighed. “ Alas ! I see that age has chilled your blood, and frozen up your heart.”

“ My Liege, I burn more than ever with devotion to your service. If this Marriage be not solemnized, and speedily, you will offend a powerful Prince, to whom you are indebted for many benefits, and also disappoint the fond hopes of your loyal people. You forget yourself, my Liege ; remember that you are a King, and King of England ! I speak to Edward ; who, stripped even of the splendours of Royalty, should still be worthy of the respect and admiration of mankind.”

“ We shall see, my Lord de Grandison,” said the King ; “ but now leave me ; leave me.”

The old Baron had no sooner left Edward, than the King summoned Trussell to an audience, and informed him of his recent interview, and of it's unfavourable result ; adding, “ I wished to speak to him of his daughter, and of my love for her ; but I know not wherefore, I was unable to explain myself. There is a fierce inflexibility about that old man, which I admire, and yet which irritates me. I reverence, and yet I fear him !”

“ And is your Grace deceived by this de Grandison's affectation of inflexibility and virtue ? Be-

lieve me, my Liege, that the old lord and his daughter both have their price; although it is a somewhat extravagant one. But suffer me to undertake your Grace's suit; and doubt not I will so manage it, that the Baron himself shall be the first to give the lovely Countess to your arms."

Upon leaving the King, Trussell speedily sought and found the Baron alone in his apartment, perusing and sighing over his despatches from the Count de Hainault. De Grandison had that instinctive aversion for his visitor, which was natural to a mind like his; still he could not refuse to listen to a messenger from the King; and Trussell accordingly called up all the resources of an artful genius, skilled in the deepest intrigues and subtleties of a Court, to explain the object of his visit with as much delicacy as possible. The old Lord listened with a cold and disdainful attention, till the conclusion of his harangue, and then replied, "Sir William Trussell, you explain yourself very clearly. The King loves my daughter, and you come to persuade me to use my influence in inducing her to yield to his Grace's wishes."

"Nay, nay, my Lord," said Trussell, "your Lordship misconceives me. I spoke merely of management and prudence; of modes of conduct to be observed by your Lordship and the Countess.

You have been more than fifty years a Courtier, my Lord, and I cannot be speaking a language which you do not understand. It is for your Lordship, therefore, to decide what answer I shall bear from you to the King."

"I will bear it myself, Sir William," said de Grandison, rising from his seat; "and that instantly."

"You cannot mean it, my Lord," said Trussell; "you surely cannot——"

"Any further conversation, between us," said de Grandison, "is quite unnecessary. His Grace shall shortly see me."

Scarcely was the unhappy Father relieved from the presence of Trussell, than he sank upon a seat in a state of distraction. "This then was Edward's reason for desiring the presence of my daughter, and he would——! but he is incapable of such baseness; it is that villain Trussell who has corrupted the princely current of his thoughts and feelings. Or can my daughter be acquainted with the King's weakness? Can Katharine be an accomplice in this amour? If but in thought she has dishonoured these grey hairs——" his look grew black as midnight as he grasped his sword, and rushed from the apartment.

The interview with his daughter at once re-

moved the most painful of the old man's suspicions, and with an anxious, but determined heart, he then presented himself before the King.

"Welcome, my Lord de Grandison," said the Monarch; "my good friend Trussell has revealed to you the precious secret of my heart; and you come to tell me I have not relied in vain upon your friendship, and your loyalty; your daughter——"

"I have just left her, my Liege; and she has laid open her whole heart to me."

"And she hates me?" said the King, impatiently.

"The most dutiful and loyal of your Grace's subjects, Katharine offers you a homage the most respectful and profound. But she is the Daughter of de Grandison; she is the Widow of Salisbury; and that neither of those names have yet been tainted with dishonour, is a truth of which the King of England needs least of all men to be reminded."

"What have I heard?" said the King.

"Truth, my Liege; Truth, to whose accents your minions would close your ears, but whom you hear speaking by my mouth. My daughter is not fitted for the rival of the Princess of Hainault; and to be —— . If I offend, my Liege, my head

is at your Grace's disposal. I have finished my course ; and shall soon be no longer in a condition to serve you. Why then should I care for the few days which nature might yet permit me to live ? At least, I shall die with the assurance, that my daughter will cherish the memory of her Father, and of his honour. Dispose of me as you please, my Liege ; you are my master."

" Yes, Traitor," answered Edward ; " and I would be your protector, and your friend : but you compel me to exhibit myself only as your Sovereign. Instantly command your daughter's presence here, or prepare yourself for a lodging in the Tower."

" The Tower, my Liege," replied de Grandison ; " I will hasten thither with as much alacrity as I interposed my shield between your Grace's breast, and the arrow which was pointed at it, on the field of battle."

" Audacious traitor !" said the Monarch ; " away with him to the Tower !"

De Grandison was immediately hurried off, closely guarded ; and at that moment Sir Neele Loring, a gallant knight, who was one of the first invested with the order of the Garter, rushed into the royal presence, exclaiming, " What have I beheld, my Liege ?"

“ The punishment due to outraged Majesty,” replied the King.

“ Nay, nay, my Liege ; wherefore deprive your old and faithful servant of his liberty ? and for what crime ? Can it be King Edward to whom I am speaking ? Can it be Edward who would load the limbs of old de Grandison with fetters ? But you relent, your Grace remembers—”

At that instant Trussell entered : “ My Liege, de Grandison vents his anger in violence and threats ; he would write to his daughter, but I have denied him permission so to do.”

“ You hear, Sir Neele,” said the King ; “ the old traitor indulges in threats towards our royal person ; but I am weary of your boldness, Sir Knight ; I am the King of England, and my subjects shall obey me.”

The bold Knight had no sooner disappeared, than an object of still greater interest presented itself ; it was the Countess of Salisbury. Pale and trembling, with dishevelled locks and streaming eyes, but still surpassingly beautiful, the lovely Katharine threw herself at the King’s feet.

“ Sire ! Sire !” she shrieked, “ give me back my Father !”

A blush of self-reproach mantled on the brow

of Edward, as he extended his hand, and raised the lovely suppliant from her knees. "Pardon, Madam," said he, "pardon the acts to which a lover's despair drives him. Remember that the first sight of you kindled in my breast a flame which yet I stifled during the lifetime of your gallant Husband. Salisbury, Heaven assoil his soul ! is now in his grave ; and yet now, when I acquaint you with my sufferings, and my hopes, you answer me only with your reproaches and your tears."

"My tears, my Liege, are all that remain to me for my defence ; and yet they touch you not."

"Say'st thou that they touch me not? Is it for you, sweet Katharine, to doubt your empire over my heart? I am no longer able to impose laws on that passion which you repay with ingratitude."

"I am no ingrate, most dread Sovereign," replied the Countess ; "would that you could see my heart. But, my Liege, can I, ought I to forget that my aged father is in fetters?"

"They shall be broken," said the King ; "He shall resume his station as my best trusted counsellor, and his daughter ——"

"Forbear, my Liege, to finish what you would say. I speak not of his daughter."

“ Then her Father, Katharine,—”

“ My Father can but die, Sire ; what right have I, my Liege, to entertain your Grace’s love, when the Princess of Hainault is waiting to take her seat beside you upon the throne of England. But release my Father, and I will wander from your presence, where the sight of the unhappy Katharine never more shall trouble you. Restore my Father to me, and we will begone from hence for ever !”

“ No, adorable Katharine !” said the King, “ your Father shall be free ; and you shall still know your Sovereign your lover, and see him worthy of your love.”

Thus saying, he left the Countess alone in the Presence Chamber, where she remained a considerable time, much wondering at his behaviour, and suffering great uneasiness of mind. At length Sir Neele Loring approached, and sinking on his knee before her, said,—“ Madam, permit me to conduct you to the place, which the King’s commands have assigned for you.”

The Countess much troubled and trembling, silently gave the Knight her hand, and traversed with him a vast suite of splendid apartments, until they at length arrived at a door, which opening led into

a magnificent Saloon, where she beheld Edward seated on his Throne, surrounded by his Courtiers; all of whom, and even the Sovereign himself, were decorated with the insignia of the Garter. Upon her entrance, the King rushed towards her, and with one hand taking hold of hers, with the other placed the Crown upon her head.

“Approach, dearest Lady!” said he, “and share the Throne of the King of England, and the homage of his subjects. Become my Consort; my Queen. Beauty, truth, and virtue call you to the Throne; and in placing you there I equally fulfil my own wishes, and those of my people. They will applaud my choice, for it is worthy of me. Your Father is free; and, both to him and you, will I repair the injustice which I have committed.”

“Beauty, my Liege,” said Sir Neele Loring, “was made to reign; for it was Man’s first Sovereign.”

The Countess, overwhelmed with the suddenness of her surprise, was scarcely able to articulate. “My Liege,” said she, “the Throne is not *my* place: the Princess of Hainault ——”

“Yes,” said the Lord de Grandison, bursting into the apartment, “*She* only must sit there!—

What, my Liege ! my Daughter crowned, and about to ascend the Throne ! Is that the price at which my chains are broken ? Back with me to the Tower ! Rather eternal slavery, than freedom purchased by dishonour !”

“ My Lord de Grandison,” said the King, “ listen to me. I have given your daughter my hand, she is my Queen, and wherefore would you oppose our happiness ?”

“ *My daughter Queen !*” exclaimed the Baron ; “ Katharine,” he added, addressing her in a tone of supplication, “ wilt thou lend thyself to the cause of falsehood and perjury ? wilt thou aid thy King to break a promise plighted in the face of Europe ? listen to me and prove thyself my daughter. Put off that diadem. Fall at the King’s feet for pardon ; or, if thou can’st not perform the dictates of duty, then die, and Heaven pardon thee !”

He drew a dagger from his bosom as he spoke, and as the King arrested his hand he continued, “ Approach me not, my Liege, or I bury this dagger in her heart. Give me thy royal word that she shall not be Queen, or ——”

“ My Liege !” said the Countess, lifting the Crown from her brow, and falling at Edward’s

feet, "it must not be; your royal word is pledged; the nation's honour is its guarantee; and war and desolation would follow the violation of your plighted promise. I am Katharine of Salisbury, your Grace's most faithful subject; but dare not be your Queen."

"Generous beings!" said the King, "it is you who teach me how to reign. Rise, gracious Madam; rise, my good Lord de Grandison. You, my noble friend, shall instantly proceed to the Court of Hainault, to bring over my affianced bride. Your lovely daughter must not be my Wife; but you will suffer her to remain at my Court, its brightest and most distinguished ornament."

Thus ended the adventure of the Garter, without any of those disastrous consequences, which once seemed so threatening. The Princess of Hainault filled the Throne to which she was called by the voice of the nation, and won and merited the love of her Royal consort. Anxious to give to the virtuous object of his former passion a splendid testimony of the sentiments which he still entertained towards her, the King, on his marriage, renewed the institution of the Order of the Garter. De Grandison long continued to hold the highest place

in the Royal favour; the Countess of Salisbury appeared at Court as the friend of Queen Philippa; and long continued the object of the respectful passion of the greatest Monarch who had ever filled the throne of England.

BLANCHE OF BOURBON.

A ROMANCE OF SPANISH HISTORY.

At *his* birth, be sure on't,
Some Devil thrust sweet Nature's hand aside,
Ere she had pour'd her balm into his breast,
To warm his gross and earthy clod with Pity.

COLMAN.

THE accession of Don Pedro to the throne of Castile, on the death of his Father Alphonso, was speedily followed by violent insurrectionary movements amongst all classes of the people. Although Pedro was the only legitimate offspring of his Father, the nation in general fondly wished that the sceptre might pass into the hands of Don Henry, Count of Trastamare, eldest son of the deceased King by his Concubine, the beautiful Leonora de Guzman. This Prince had already distinguished himself by his valour and wisdom ;

his kind and condescending demeanour ; and even by his attachment and fidelity to the new King ; since he laboured with the utmost solicitude not only to confirm the allegiance of his own partizans to Pedro, but to discourage every attempt at disturbing the peace of the Monarchy. Pedro, however, who by his conduct during his Reign acquired the surname of “ the Cruel,” took the earliest opportunity of seizing the person of Don Henry’s Mother, Leonora, whom he immediately committed to the custody of the Queen Dowager ; who no sooner found her hated rival in her power, than she caused her to be put to a cruel and lingering death. All Castile was indignant at this atrocity ; and Don Henry flew to arms. Don Frederick, Grand Master of St. James’, Don Tello, Lord of Aguilar, and Don Ferdinand, Lord of Ledesne, his brothers, the other sons of the unfortunate Leonora, immediately joined him ; and, having raised a considerable force, took possession of the town of Gijon, and bade defiance to the tyrant.

Intelligence of the revolt of the Princes was brought to Don Pedro as he was taking his evening promenade on the terrace of the royal gardens of Valladolid, accompanied by his Prime Minister, Don Alphonso d’Albuquerque. “ Hearest thou

this, Alphonso?" said the King. "The Bastard Henry, and his Brothers, have garrisoned the Castle of Gijon, and troops, headed by the discontented nobles, are daily flocking to their assistance."

"I hear it, Sire," said the Minister, "with sorrow and alarm."

"And wherefore so, good Alphonso?" replied Don Pedro. "Let all the factions in Castile, and they are not a few, rally round the banner of the Bastards; let the puling Kings of Arragon and Navarre, who have already shewn that they bear me no good will, join in the traitorous league; aye, let even the powers of France, and the proud islanders of the West, for once agree for my destruction; yet I fear not. I have Allies, whose power and influence, not all of these together banded, could withstand."

"And who, Sire," enquired the Minister wonderingly; "who are the Allies who could possibly defend your Majesty against such a confederacy?"

"The Stars! the Stars are with us, Albuquerque!" exclaimed the King. "Look yonder," he continued, pointing to the sky; "and see how even now, at the very instant that I receive this news, the Heavens are smiling on me."

Albuquerque looked towards the sky, and be-

held indeed one of those evenings of surpassing beauty, which are seldom seen even beneath the glowing atmosphere of Spain. The Sun had set some time, but still the west retained a portion of his declining glory, which, with a varied line of deep red light, defined the summits of the distant hills. Above them spread the deep blue sky, bespangled with innumerable Stars, intensely bright; amongst which, the largest and most resplendent was the planet Jupiter, which shone over the Palace of Valladolid, and seemed to be shedding its brightest beams upon the royal residence.

“ That is my natal Star !” said the King; “ that noble planet, or rather that other Sun, which seems to traverse the system in rivalry, and not in the train of the great source of light and heat. See, how all others shrink their beams before him. Even Mars, that lurid orb which now threatens me, quails before his superior brightness. The omens are most propitious !”

“ Even so, Oh King !” said a sharp, shrill voice behind them; and, turning round, they perceived an aged man, of a noble and venerable countenance, with a long white beard, and black expressive eyes, which rivalled in brightness even the Stars on which they had been gazing. He wore a turban on his head, and was dressed after the Oriental fashion, in a white flowing robe. This

was Simon Joseph, the favourite Jewish Physician, and Astrologer to the King, whom he kept constantly about his person.

“ Sayest thou so, good Joseph !” said Don Pedro ; “ and who shall gainsay *thee*, when thou hast read the Stars ? But what brings thee hither, at this hour ?”

“ I came to tell thee, Sire, that this evening, as I drew thy Horoscope, I read the prediction of strange events. Danger, and contest, but, at the same time, triumph and victory were foretold there ; aye, and Love was mentioned in the starry prophecy. Yon planet Jupiter is now Lord of the ascendant ; Mars and Venus are in conjunction ; and Saturn, dull and dim, is quenched beneath their overwhelming influence.”

“ Thou read'st strange riddles, Simon Joseph,” said Don Pedro ; “ but a part, at least, of thy prophecy is true : for I hold here letters, which inform me, that the sons of Leonora de Guzman are in arms ; and defy me from behind the strong walls of Gijon. What would'st thou have me do ?”

“ On to the fight, Sire !” said the Astrologer, and then added, pointing to the planet Jupiter, “ before that Star sets behind the western hills, let the King be on his march to battle, and to conquest. Don Pedro, do not hope for ease and quietness, but thy reign shall be long and prosperous. Victory shall wait upon thy banners,

and new kingdoms shall be added to Castile.” Thus saying, and drawing his robe more closely round him, Simon Joseph left the Terrace, and the King and his Minister speedily followed him. Don Pedro, amongst whose vices cowardice could not be numbered, determined to adopt the advice of the Astrologer. Although he scoffed at all idea of Religion, he was a fervent believer in the occult Sciences, and never entered upon any pursuit of importance without consulting the Stars. That very evening, accordingly, saw him at the head of as many troops as could be mustered at so short a notice, depart from Valladolid, having left instructions for a formidable force to follow him.

In a few days the King of Castile, with a numerous Army, had sat down before the Gates of Gijon. They had already had various skirmishes on their march with detached parties of the enemy; and on their first attack upon the town they carried the most important outpost; so that ultimate success now appeared certain. In the mean time, however, the heart of the Monarch had surrendered at the first summons to the charms of a beautiful young female, of a noble family, named Maria de Padilla, in the suite of Madame d’Albuquerque, who had followed her husband to

the army. This young lady possessed numerous attractions, both of mind and person. Although not tall, she was exquisitely formed; and her whole form and manner were equally graceful and bewitching. Her complexion was of the most dazzling fairness; her eyes black and sparkling; and her features of a regularity, in which the most fastidious connoisseur in beauty could find nothing to object to. She possessed an infinite fund of wit, and was of a gay and lively temper; but she was, at the same time, vain and ambitious; and a perfect mistress of every species of dissimulation. Obdurate and sanguinary as was the disposition of Don Pedro, he became deeply fascinated with the charms of Maria; "and Love," say the Historians of that age, "held in his bosom divided empire with cruelty." She, dazzled by the splendour of royalty, and the prospect of power and greatness, turned a deaf ear to the remonstrances of virtue; and after a very feeble and ill counterfeited resistance, became the Mistress of the King of Castile. Don Pedro was now as eager to conclude the war, as he had been to commence it; and having made terms with the revolted Princes, he disbanded his forces, and retired with Maria to Torrejos, a little town near Toledo.

It is necessary to state here, that previous to

the occurrence of these events, Don Pedro had asked in marriage the hand of the beautiful Blanche de Bourbon, Sister of the Queen of France, and the Duke of Burgundy; who, during the King's absence on his expedition to Gijon, had arrived in the city of Valladolid, and was there awaiting the celebration of the nuptial contract. To that city the other Princes repaired on the cessation of hostilities, and the King commended his bride to the especial attention of Don Henry, Count of Trastamare, until his own return. The Count, on his arrival, found that the French Princess, of whose beauty and accomplishments the most glowing accounts had been generally circulated, far surpassed all that rumour had spoken, or imagination had portrayed. She was of a majestic figure, tall, and finely formed. The mild but glowing Suns of France had given a dark tinge to her cheeks, which well matched with the intense deep blue of her eyes, and the jetty ringlets which fell in rich clusters down her neck. Her pale high forehead and drooping eyelids, spoke of pensiveness, and perhaps melancholy; but the smile which frequently illuminated all her features,

“ As though her veins ran lightning,”

was full of benevolence and sweetness; and told,

not falsely, the goodness of her heart. Her voice was low and gentle, but it's tones went to the heart of the listener; and her stately step, and majestic gait, while they befitted the high station which she filled, were unmingled with the slightest indication of arrogance, or pride.

As Don Henry gazed upon this enchanting being, he could not but lament that she was destined to become the bride of a man, who, although of high talents, and of handsome and even majestic person, was stained with almost every vice under Heaven. Still he indulged a hope, and that hope was shared by many, that the beauty and virtues of the Princess, could not but have a genial effect on the disposition of her Husband, and be productive of important benefits, both to him and to the nation. The Queen Mother had received her with the most flattering distinction; the Grandees in Valladolid took every opportunity of testifying their devotion; and, whenever she appeared in public, she was greeted with the warmest acclamations of the populace. Still, however, the King remained at Torrejos, in the society of Maria de Padilla; and had not even had the courtesy to send any communication to her, or to the Queen. He would not listen to any intelligence of his betrothed bride, or even attend to

State affairs. The letters of his Mother, expressing her chagrin and indignation at his conduct, and the remonstrances of his Minister, who represented the impolicy of this treatment of a Princess of the blood royal of France, were received with equal disregard. At length his Courtiers were constrained to be silent, for some of them who had ventured to speak their minds rather too freely upon the subject, he had found himself under the awkward necessity of assassinating. The influence of Maria increased daily; and to such an extent, that it was very generally believed she had established her dominion over him, by practising the art of Magic. He caused a Tourney to be celebrated in her honour; and compelled all the Grandees at Toledo, and in it's neighbourhood, with their wives and daughters, to be present. Here he chanced to be so severely wounded in his hand, that his life was despaired of by his Physicians; though, after a long delay, the attentions and medical skill of Maria de Padilla wrought his complete cure, to the infinite regret of the nation, and of the Court, but especially of Don Henry.

This Prince was indefatigable in his attendance upon the young Queen elect, and endeavoured, by the most delicate attentions, to console her for the neglect of her betrothed Don Pedro. The Queen

returned his attentions by a gratitude which was expressed rather in her eyes, than with her lips ; until at length a more tender feeling by degrees began to pervade the breasts of both ; although they dared scarcely confess it, even to themselves, and much less to each other. Indignation at her affianced husband's conduct, and pity for her own forlorn situation, were no unnatural harbingers of love in the bosom of Don Henry : while Blanche, as she gazed on his fine person, and thought of his strong and polished mind ; his military renown ; and his high birth ; for his illegitimacy was scarcely considered a stain in those days, could not help thinking how suitable their union would have been ; and wishing, like *Desdemona*,—

“ That Heaven had made her such a man ! ”

These, however, were thoughts, which they carefully locked up within their own bosoms, and which were soon afterwards banished even from those secret sanctuaries, by the unexpected arrival of the King.

Don Pedro had at length yielded to the advice of his wisest Counsellors ; which was seconded by Maria de Padilla herself ; and determined to pay a visit to the Princess Blanche, whom, as yet, he had not even seen. The meeting of the Royal

couple was in the streets of Valladolid, by torch-light. The King entered the City on horseback, attended by Don Ferdinand, and Don Juan of Arragon, sons of his Aunt, the Queen Dowager of Arragon; the Grand Master of Calatrava, the Archbishop of Toledo, Don Juan de la Cerda, Don Alphonso d'Albuquerque, and other great lords. The young Queen rode between the Queen Mother and the Count of Trastamare; and was attended by the Grand Master of St. James', Don Tello of Castile, and the municipal authorities of Valladolid. The streets were crowded with the population of the City, eager to see the meeting; but, above all, to catch a glimpse of the young Queen, whose beauty was seen to great advantage by the light of the innumerable torches which blazed around her. As she approached the King, the acclamations of the people redoubled, but they were frozen into wondering silence, as they observed the cold and indifferent air with which he returned her salute. She descended from her palfrey, and it was naturally expected that he would have done the same; but he merely extended her his hand to kiss, while he continued in conversation with his minister, Don Alphonso.

"The monster!" muttered Don Henry between his teeth, as he assisted Blanche to remount.

“Aye,” whispered some one in his ear; “is this the man to be King of Castile, and husband of Blanche of Bourbon?”

Henry turned round, but could perceive no one. His own heart, however, echoed the question; and, silently and moodily, he continued to ride on, until the Palace gates appeared before him, and he, together with the rest of the procession, entered.

The next day was appointed for the celebration of the Marriage ceremony, and, with the earliest dawn of morning, all the bells in Valladolid were ringing a merry peal; and the citizens appeared in the streets in their holiday garbs, and wearing white favours in honour of the event. A peremptory order from the King was, however, soon issued for the silencing of the bells, and commanding every one to return to his ordinary occupation, upon pain of death. At the hour of noon the Royal cavalcade was seen moving towards the Cathedral, slowly and silently as a Funeral procession. The King wore a look of dogged endurance; and Blanche was pale as death; but there was a forced smile upon her lip, which appeared more melancholy than sighs and tears could possibly have done. The Queen Mother's face glowed with resentment and chagrin; and Don Henry kept his eyes fixed upon Blanche, with an

expression in which pity, and a still softer feeling, could be traced most legibly. The Nobles who accompanied the royal party, with heads depressed, and their arms folded sullenly upon their bosoms, looked more like mutes at an interment, than assistants at a bridal.

Notwithstanding the royal mandate, the populace had ventured again to assemble in the streets when the procession passed; but pale and silent, each of them appeared to feel that he was committing a crime, and each look which was bent upon the personages as they passed, was stealth-like and timid. As Don Pedro rode by them, every head was bared, but not one voice was heard in gratulation. The approach of Blanche was hailed with loud acclamations, which were, however, instantly suppressed; and every one looked timidly over his shoulder, and seemed to fear that he had committed an offence, for which instant punishment would follow. Every eye was fixed on the Count of Trastamare, and gleamed brighter as he passed; but no one dared to give an open expression to his feelings. One voice, however, which the Count instantly recognised as the same which had addressed him on the preceding day, was heard to shout from amidst the crowd, "God save King Henry!"

All were aghast at this daring exclamation. The populace shrank back with fear and horror; but the nobles in the Procession, as soon as they had recovered from the stupor of their surprise, cried out "Treason! treason!"

"Guards, seize the traitor!" exclaimed Don Alphonso d'Albuquerque, "and drag him hither."

A tall, stout-built man, but pale and squalid, with an extraordinary expression of resolution and defiance in his countenance, was immediately forced before the King, on whose left hand rode Don Alphonso. Don Pedro's colour changed as he gazed upon him, but the ordinary malignant expression of his features was deepened tenfold as he exclaimed, "What do'st thou here, Villain?"

"What do'st *thou* here?" returned the unshrinking Stranger; "thou man of lust and blood! with yonder fair and hapless Princess in thy train? How long is it since you tore my Sister from her abode, the most peaceful and the happiest in all Castile, to lodge her in thy vile Harem? How long is it since thy steel drank the blood of her indignant husband? How long——?"

"Bind him! gag him!" exclaimed the King, foaming with passion. "Lend me thy axe, fellow!" continued he, vaulting from his horse, and snatching a partizan from a guard near him. The

victim was immediately bound, and thrown upon the earth; when the King, lifting with his own hand the fatal weapon, at one blow severed his head from his body.

A smile of grim delight played upon the tyrant's features as he gazed upon the mutilated trunk before him; and listened to the fearful shriek which burst from the assembled crowd, who with starting eyes and pallid cheeks stared upon each other, as if to ask if what they had just witnessed was a reality. The unhappy Blanche had fainted in the arms of her attendants; but Don Pedro, without waiting for her recovery, with a yell of savage laughter again sprang into his saddle, and, motioning to his attendants to move on, rode forwards to the Cathedral. There, shortly afterwards the Bride, or rather the victim, arrived more dead than alive; and joining her hand with that which was yet wet with the blood which it had shed, this ill-omened Marriage was solemnized, amidst the fear and wonder of all who were present at the ceremony.

Three days had elapsed after the nuptials, and Don Pedro was yet inseparable from his beautiful Queen; to whom, those about him began to hope that he would become really and permanently attached: but on the third he received letters from

Maria de Padilla, who was at Montalban, in which she complained bitterly of his absence from her, and informed him that she found herself pregnant. On receiving this intelligence, the King's joy knew no bounds; and he immediately summoned his Minister, Don Alphonso, and commanded him to prepare for their immediate departure to join his Mistress.

“Sire,” said Don Alphonso, “to hear is to obey; but might the humblest of your subjects venture to speak his mind, he would say, that if this journey were postponed for a short time, her Majesty would be less likely to complain, and the factions who pretend to espouse her cause, would be unable to find the slightest ground for censuring the conduct of your Majesty.”

“Peace, idiot!” cried the King furiously; “have I not already devoted three days to this Bourbon doll; and as for the factions are not the poniard, and the gibbet, and the axe, enough for them?”

“Sire,” continued the Minister, “is it well to leave Don Henry in the midst of the discontented populace of the Capital, while your Majesty is at Montalban? Already do dreams of power and sovereignty fill his imagination, and——”

“What! dares the Bastard look so high as

that?" said Pedro, with a malicious grin: "well, well, his hour will come, but not yet. Love and Maria are all that can engage my thoughts at present. See, then, that you provide for our instant journey."

In less than an hour after this conversation, the King, accompanied by Don Alphonso, and his other immediate favourites, and attended by the Royal Guard, passed the City gates; but as he had taken no leave of the Queen, or of his Mother, and had given no previous intimation of his intention to quit Valladolid, it was supposed that he was merely gone to enjoy the chase in the neighbouring forest. Messengers, however, speedily arrived to Madame d'Albuquerque from her husband, to inform her that the King and he had set off for Montalban, and that they had instructions to escort her thither. The rage of the Queen Mother was now ungovernable, and she could scarcely be restrained from rushing forth to the market-place, and rousing the populace. Don Henry, whose attachment to Blanche increased in the same proportion with her husband's neglect and cruelty, felt his bosom agitated by love and indignation. Still he possessed so much of the chivalrous loyalty of those days, which bound the subject to his Sovereign, however despicable or

infamous he might be, that he could not persuade himself to encourage any insurrectionary movement; notwithstanding his own personal injuries, and although he knew that he had but to lift his finger, and the whole population of Valladolid would espouse his cause. He, therefore, contented himself by paying the most delicate and respectful attention to the young Queen; and thus endeavouring, as far as possible, to alleviate her neglected and forlorn condition. The people, also, now that the expression of their feelings was unrestrained by the presence of Don Pedro, took every opportunity afforded them by her appearance at the windows of the Palace, or her riding out in public, to greet her with the most cordial acclamations. The King in the mean time continued at Montalban, completely fascinated with the attractions of Maria de Padilla; all public business was totally neglected by him; and although messenger after messenger arrived from Valladolid, on the most urgent State affairs, he could not be persuaded to return there, or even to peruse the despatches of which they were the bearers. The Queen Mother repeatedly wrote to him, reproaching him with his base conduct; and Don Alphonso, his favourite Minister, ceased not to urge the offence which he was giving to his subjects and

to the neighbouring Princes, until at length he reluctantly consented to return to Valladolid; but only on the condition, that Maria de Padilla should accompany him, and should be received by the two Queens at Court.

Behold then the Castilian Monarch once more in his Capital, or rather in the City which was then usually the Royal residence, and in which the public business was transacted. His Mistress was received with coldness and distance by the Queen Mother, and with frigid indifference by Blanche. With matchless self-possession and effrontery, however, she continued to appear at Court; where the Nobles thronged around her, as the favourite of the King, and her distinguished wit and beauty soon made their devotion no constraint, or at any rate, rendered their chains very light and easy to be worn. Amongst the numerous Grandees of Spain, she soon singled out Don Henry as superior both in mind and person to all the others. Her heart even began to be treacherous to her Royal paramour, and she felt that her affections were fixing themselves upon the Count of Trastamare. To her inexpressible chagrin also, she found that he studiously avoided paying the slightest attention to her; that he was pensive and fond of solitude; and that he was evidently a prey to some intense

mental suffering. A feeling of compassion accordingly mingled with the sentiments which she already entertained towards him, and confirmed in her bosom the existence of the tyrant passion, Love. The difficulty of obtaining a private interview with him, was, however, extremely great, as the King required her to be constantly about his person ; and the Count shunned her like a pestilence. Could she but once acquaint Don Henry with her attachment, she could scarcely anticipate the possibility of his not returning it ; and even should he refuse, she felt assured that she could win him to her embraces by the consideration of the precarious situation of himself and his brothers ; who were detested alike by the Queen Mother, and the King ; and of the importance of their making a friend of her.

She had observed that the Count was in the habit of retiring to the most solitary and unfrequented parts of the Royal gardens, and resolved, therefore, one morning, to endeavour to trace him to his haunts, and have an explanation with him on that subject with which her bosom was now incessantly haunted. She had traversed the grounds in all directions, and began to despair of succeeding in the object of her search, when at length she arrived at a Grotto, far out of the ordinary route,

and, entering it, perceived Don Henry stretched upon the moss in a deep slumber. His face was wet with tears, and even in his sleep he heaved profound sighs. Maria instantly conjectured that his malady was Love. "Perhaps too," thought she, "I may be the object of it. Perhaps the studious manner in which he avoids me, and which I have attributed to aversion, is only the result of his timidity. But alas!" she continued, sighing, "it is too probable that I have a rival; and, if so, Maria de Padilla shall not long be unavenged." As she spake these words, the Count moved in his sleep; and, in turning, discovered some open tablets, upon which his left arm had rested, which Maria hastily seized, and hurrying out of the Grotto, read in them the following lines:—

"Cease, cease, my heart! to nurse a hopeless love;
The end of all thy perseverance lies
Within the orbs of two bright sparkling eyes;
But cold as they are bright. Nor can'st thou move
One spark of passion in that colder breast,
Or wake one hope that shall, 'midst thy unrest,
Sing like a sweet bird to my weary Soul.
I dare not even whisper in her ear,
Whom I adore, the griefs that o'er me roll,
O'erwhelming all my peace; yet still the tear
That wets my lids, how sweet it is to weep
Such precious dew! Then will I silence keep,
And strive to hide my love even from my heart,
But still flow on my tears, with ye I cannot part."

The jealous suspicions which she had entertained were now confirmed, and her whole frame shook with the violence of her emotions. So severe a respect as was here expressed, could not have reference to her. "It is the Queen! 'tis Blanche!" she said; and as the hated idea entered her mind, it wrung it almost to madness. "That Bourbon serpent crosses my path at every step! Through her the people hate me! Her beauty, the dull, tame beauty of France, attracts the Courtiers from me. With difficulty have I won the wittol King from her; and now, where my very heart is treasured up, she has coiled herself around it's tenderest fibres." Having carefully copied out the verses, she then erased them, and, in a feigned hand, wrote the following in their place:—

"ORACLE.

It is permitted to thee to sigh, and to love, and to hope;
To act, and to break the seal of silence.
Be in no fear either of a sceptre, or of rivals.
My heart, one worthy of thee, is interested in thy woes:
Behold, then, the reward of perseverance!"

After this she returned to the Grotto, and meeting no one there, replaced the tablets where she had found them.

In the mean time, Don Henry on awakening

had missed his treasure, and was much disconcerted in consequence. He made a careful search, but, of course, his search was unavailing. He enquired of the gardeners if they had seen any person enter, but they all replied in the negative. He then retired with great dismay to his chamber, and was not seen again till the evening; when he once more proceeded to his favourite haunt, and was agreeably surprised to find his tablets in the place in which he had lost them. He opened, and, scarcely believing his eyes, read the Oracle which Maria de Padilla had written in them. At first he was transported with joy, for he hoped that what he read had been written by the Queen; but as he reflected more calmly, the improbability of such an idea impressed itself so strongly upon him, that he dismissed it altogether from his mind. It was evident, however, that the precious secret of his heart was in the possession of another, who might make some pernicious use of it; and as he laid his head upon his pillow that night, his bosom was distracted with a variety of painful emotions.

The next day the Queen Mother held a Court, and Don Henry as he was proceeding to it along the Palace corridors, met Queen Blanche coming out of her apartments, and leaning upon the Arm of an Esquire. He immediately offered her his

own, which she accepted with the utmost frankness, and the Page submissively gave way. As they entered in the Royal presence, Henry could not prevent the joy of his heart from manifesting itself in his face, and having seated Blanche beside the Queen Mother, he took his station behind her chair. The whole Court rose on the entrance of Queen Blanche, excepting the King, who manifested some displeasure at the rising of Maria de Padilla, who was seated next him. The latter did not fail to observe the delight which Henry evinced, as he entered with his lovely escort, and whispered to the King, as she glanced towards Blanche and Henry, "These two persons appear to be on a remarkably good understanding with each other, my Liege. The Count of Trastamare appears to hold a very high place in her Majesty's esteem."

"Very possibly," answered the King; "but the partizans of her immaculate virtue would institute a process against us for daring to hold a doubt of it's most perfect purity."

"I should be rather difficult to convince, nevertheless," replied Maria. "The French ladies are, as every one knows, not only liberal, but even prodigal, when they would secure a suitor. But you do not exhibit any symptoms of jealousy."

“ I should exhibit enough of them,” interrupted Don Pedro, “ if Henry were enamoured of *you* ; but my heart takes so little interest either in the actions, or the feelings, of Blanche de Bourbon, that it is out of her power to disturb my peace of mind for a moment.”

While the King and his mistress were thus conversing, the whole Court was astonished at the assurance and self-possession of Maria de Padilla, who appeared to consider herself as the most distinguished female present, and took not the slightest notice of Queen Blanche, after having at first risen upon her entrance. The two Queens were, however, engaged with each other, and seemed not to regard either the neglect of Don Pedro, or the assumption of his paramour. The Count of Trastamare, in the mean time, was hardly able to restrain an open explosion of his anger and indignation ; and the practised eye of Maria, who continued narrowly to observe him, easily detected the real state of his feelings. The King, at length weary of the restraint and formality to which he found himself obliged to submit, arose, and taking no other notice of Blanche, beyond coldly saluting her as he past, left the Court, followed by his immediate retainers. Maria, partly out of regard for a decorous appearance,

and partly from the pleasure which she experienced in being in the presence of Don Henry, remained for a few moments, in the seat which she had occupied, and then also followed the King.

Don Henry still stood behind the chair of Blanche, and as her brutal husband passed her in the manner in which we have described, he gave utterance to a deep drawn sigh.

"You are in love, my Lord," said the Queen, turning round to him, and smiling.

"I am so, indeed, Madam," replied Henry; "my respect for your Majesty will not allow me to disavow it, but my affection is mingled with anger."

"You are then," added Blanche, "more unhappy than I had supposed; for you are also jealous."

"Alas! no, Madam; I am so far from jealousy, that my anger is excited, because others do not pay to the object of my love the attentions and respect which are due to matchless beauty, and unequalled virtue."

As he uttered these last words, he seized her hand, and kissed it fervently. She withdrew it silently, but her heart too well understood his meaning, and she sighed deeply, as she compared the handsome and accomplished Prince who knelt

before her, with the man with whose destiny her own was indissolubly united.

“Your Majesty also sighs,” said Henry.

“Few persons are exempt from some sorrow,” returned the Queen; and she sighed still more deeply.

“True, Madam,” said the Count; “and your Majesty finds cause enough in the cruel and injurious treatment of the King.”

“Nay,” said Blanche, “his Majesty, unkind as he appears, has doubtless ample reasons for his conduct. Some strange fault of mine must be apparent to him, which my ignorance has not yet discovered to myself.”

“Say not so, sweet lady,” replied Henry; “he can see nothing in you but goodness. Where is the wonder that a Monster should be the enemy of beauty?”

“How can you call him an enemy of beauty,” asked the Queen, “when you look upon Maria de Padilla? but I entreat you, Sir, let us close this conversation which has already proceeded too far.”

Thus saying, the Queen rose, and left the Presence Chamber; when the whole Court followed her example: and Blanche proceeded, accompanied by a young French lady, named Adelaide de

Montauban, who was much in her confidence, to take her accustomed walk in the Royal gardens. To Adelaide she had already confessed that she felt a more than ordinary interest for the Count of Trastamare, and that she considered him the noblest and most accomplished Cavalier at the Castilian Court; and she now related to her the conversation which had recently passed between them, and her consequent uneasiness.

“ The Count, Madam,” returned Adelaide, “ is doubtless enamoured of your Majesty. His conduct towards you has long convinced me of it; and if you have not observed it, I am persuaded that Maria de Padilla has not been so blind. Her watchful eye is ever upon him, or upon your Majesty, and the expression sometimes of envy, and sometimes of malignity, in her countenance, shews that she takes a more than ordinary interest in the affair.”

“ I have felt her basilisk glance upon me,” said the Queen, “ more frequently than I desired. But hark! what noise is that?”

The interesting nature of their conversation had led them much beyond their usual walk, and as they approached the Grotto, which has been already mentioned, they heard voices in earnest conversation.

“Nay,” said a voice, which they immediately recognised to be that of the Grand Master of St. James’, the brother of Don Henry, “wherefore deny a fact so apparent to all? What else mean this abstracted carriage, these solitary rambles, these sighs, and even tears? this refraining from all pursuits consistent with your age, and character, and rank?”

“And are not,” said Don Henry, “the load of ills with which Castile is distracted, and the injurious treatment with which our house is overwhelmed, sufficient to account for all this? Can I mix in the follies and frivolities of the Court of Valladolid, while my heart is bleeding with the wounds of my country, and with it’s own?”

“Alas! my brother,” replied the Grand Master, “the injuries of Castile, and of our house, are of a much more ancient date than this change in your behaviour. When you first became aware of them, they worked very different effects upon you, from those which I now behold. Then you were the lion roused from his lair; now you are the sloth shrinking to it’s hiding-place. You are in love, Henry, and Queen Blanche is the object of your misguided passion.”

“You have probed me to the heart,” exclaimed

Don Henry, "and extracted from it the secret which I thought hidden in it's deepest recesses."

The Queen now listened with the most intense and painful interest, but the voices grew faint and indistinct, and were soon lost in the distance.

"Unhappy that I am!" she cried, "hated where I expected to be beloved; and beloved where love is crime, and the parent not of delight, but of danger, and misery, and guilt. Oh! that we were once more in our own sweet France, Adelaide! where hearts are happy as the skies are genial. Where no torrid clime like this mingles pestilence with it's grandeur, and poison with it's beauty; where the Suns scorch not while they warm; and where hearts are the nurseries of feelings, fervent and passionate as those that exist here, but unmixed with cruelty, and unstained with sorrow, or with crime."

By this time all the persons of whom this narrative treats had nearly come to an *eclaircissement* with each other; excepting that Maria de Padilla had not yet had an opportunity of fully explaining to the Count of Trastamare the sentiments which she entertained towards him. That opportunity was, however, very soon afterwards afforded her, on the occasion of the Marriage of his brother

Don Tello, the Lord of Aguila, with the beautiful Donna Joanna de Lara, heiress to the Signiory of Biscay.

As all the nobility in Valladolid were to be present at the solemnization of this Marriage, and the entertainment which followed, Don Pedro, much as he hated all his brothers, was constrained, out of policy, and in order to preserve an appearance of cordiality and reconciliation, to shew himself at the nuptial feast; although he, as usual, stipulated for the presence of Maria de Padilla also. Don Henry was, of course, of the party; but he continued to wear that look of abstraction and melancholy, for which he had lately become remarkable; but his brother, the Grand Master, had told him that his every look and action were minutely watched by Maria, and had, therefore, conjured him not to keep his eyes so constantly fixed upon the Queen. Thus cautioned, he withdrew them from the object of his affection, and fixed them upon the ground. After the Banquet, the party divided into numerous groups; and, of the more distinguished personages present, Don Pedro attached himself to the Queen Mother; Blanche conversed with the young Bride; the Bridegroom and Don Alphonso d'Albuquerque were engaged in close conversation with each other; and Don

Henry found himself obliged to submit to the advances of Maria de Padilla.

“Count of Trastamare,” said she, smiling, “it belongs neither to your rank, or to your age to appear thus abstracted and pensive in so distinguished an assembly; and if your *perseverance* proposes to itself no other *end*, it appears to me to be but to little purpose. Is it of the earth on which we tread that you are enamoured? It seems that you cannot prevail upon yourself to look upon any thing else, and because that is mute, I suppose you have vowed to be so also.”

Maria was the object of Don Henry’s unmixed hatred and contempt, and but for the words *perseverance* and *end*, which she had used in the course of her address to him, and which he instantly recognised as having been contained in the verses which he had lost, he would not have deigned her an answer. His curiosity, however, as well as his fears, was roused, and he replied,—“If I am amorous of the Earth, fair Lady, then have I as many rivals as there are kingdoms and provinces, and all the heroes who exist dispute her favours with me: what wonder, therefore, is it that I am sad?”

“Then,” returned Maria, “you should address your vows to objects where you would meet with

no competition, and where they would be favourably received. Have you any difficulty in explaining the *Oracle*, or must I interpret for you?"

"Madam," answered the Count, "we have discontinued the customs of antiquity, and I know not that you would be a just interpreter of the decrees of heaven."

"It is only of the decrees of Love that I would speak," replied Maria; "and if I were to interpret them to you now, perhaps it would not be for the first time. Behold," she added, giving him the verses which she had copied from his tablets, "and tell me whether a heart which can thus express itself stands in need of consolation?"

The terrible words which Dante read upon the gates of Hell could scarcely have excited a stronger agitation, than that which Henry felt at beholding his Sonnet in the hands of this artful and malignant woman. Fear, scorn, and indignation took by turns possession of his bosom. His own situation and that of his brothers was sufficiently insecure at the Court of a cruel and treacherous tyrant, under the domination of such a woman; and to this was now added the peril to which he had exposed the Queen, by placing her in the power of her bitterest enemy.

Maria perceived his agitation and exclaimed,—
“ You fear me, and you have reason so to do ;
because I can make a very different use of your
secret from that which I would wish. Although I
am not indebted to you for my knowledge of that
secret, yet will I put you in possession of my own ;
leaving the opposition of scruples to common minds.
What can you hope from the sentiments which
you entertain for Blanche of Bourbon ? Think
you, that after discovering my own passion, I will
suffer you to indulge yours with impunity ? Speak
then, Don Henry, is my love returned ? or, are we
henceforth mortal enemies ? for, after the pangs
which this avowal costs me, I will accept of only
love or enmity ! ”

That it had cost her much was evident, from
her tone and manner ; for, while she spake, even
the unabashed front of Maria de Padilla was suf-
fused with a crimson hue. Her voice faltered ;
her head drooped ; and the moisture in her eyes
for once attested the sincerity of her expressions.
The Count was also sufficiently agitated. With
all her beauty, and all her talents, he could not
surmount the indignation and contempt in which
he held her ; and even that beauty, and those ta-
lents, suffered, in his mind, in comparison with

those of the Queen. The idea, too, that he had exposed the latter to the malignity of her rival, overwhelmed him with terror.

“ I confess, Madam,” at length he answered, “ that I am the author of those love verses to which you replied by an Oracle: but what does that fact prove further, than that I have an inclination for Poetry? If I were in love with the Queen, should I be insane enough to discover it so rashly? The sentiments towards me which you have with so much delicacy avowed, bind me your grateful slave for ever. You are beautiful enough to drive a man of my age mad with ecstasy. But I must preserve, for I have reason enough so to do, the respect which I owe the King, and ——”

“ You would lose it with all your heart,” said Maria, interrupting him, “ if the Queen asked you. I love you, to my misfortune. Take care that you do not love her to her misfortune, and your own. None speak as I have spoken, until their resolves are fully made. Remember that it is dangerous to make me suffer; and that I am not of the humour to let my blushes be seen and despised, with impunity.”

Thus saying, she walked away without waiting for his answer, and entered into conversation with Madame d’Albuquerque. The rest of

the evening passed off gloomily and heavily. The King sat mute and motionless; the Queen, after vainly endeavouring to rally her spirits, sank at last into that listless melancholy which the presence of Don Pedro always inspired; and the Count relapsed into his usual abstractedness and silence, from which he was only roused by the breaking up of the party.

That night a thousand agitating feelings of love, jealousy, anger, and mortified pride, haunted the bosom of Maria de Padilla. She had stooped to solicit the affection of Don Henry, and her suit had been rejected. Sometimes she meditated his death, and she knew that she could procure it easily. She had but to hint such a wish to her Royal lover, who then slumbered by her side, and the Count of Trastamare would be speedily numbered with those who were. Then again, all her love for him rushed upon her heart, and the idea which she had conceived but a moment before, was rejected with horror. Then the hated image of Blanche of Bourbon would occupy her mind: that double rival, with charms and graces at least equal to her own; and with virtues which won for her the benedictions and esteem of all. "That serpent must be crushed," said she; "and who dare do it, if not I? Yet, yet," she added, as some-

thing of woman's softness mingled with her hate and jealousy, "even she might be spared, could but Henry be weaned from her. I must see and speak to him on that subject once again; and, should he still continue obstinate, let the bolt fall!"

Thoughts like these so occupied her mind during the whole of the night, as to chase away all slumber from her eyelids; and soon after daybreak she rose to seek the Grotto in which she had before discovered Don Henry; resolved, should she again find him there, to obtain an explicit declaration. Leaving the King still slumbering, she descended to the gardens; yet though the Sun had not long risen, and the night dews were still thick upon the ground; when she arrived at the Grotto she found that some persons were there before her, and heard voices in earnest conversation. As she approached near enough to be able to see who they were, she was astounded to behold Queen Blanche, and Don Henry on his knees, before her; and to hear the Count exclaim, as he seized her hand and kissed it rapturously, "Fly, dearest Madam! fly from a cruel tyrant, who hates you; and a malignant rival, who is plotting your destruction!"

At that moment the demons of jealousy and hatred took full possession of the soul of Maria de

Padilla ; and, as she gasped for breath, she was obliged to lean against a tree, to support herself from falling. As soon, however, as she recovered her bodily strength, she did not hesitate for an instant as to the course which she should pursue, but swiftly and silently retracing her steps to the chamber of the slumbering King, she there shrieked out, “ Awake, Don Pedro ! King of Castile, awake ! Treason and dishonour are in thy Palace ! Awake ! awake ! ”

The King started from his sleep, and seizing a dagger which always hung beside him, stared wildly in the direction whence the voice proceeded ; “ Ha ! my sweet Maria ! ” said he, as a smile succeeded the scowl upon his brow, when he perceived by whom his slumber had been disturbed, “ is it thou ? ’twas but a hideous dream then. Methought I lay, powerless and helpless, upon the earth, whilst the accursed Henry stood above me with a naked sword, which Blanche of Bourbon directed to my heart. I had no power to stir, but felt his fatal steel drinking my life blood, when thy sweet voice awoke me. It was a silly dream, Love ! but —— ”

“ Your dream was true, my Liege,” replied Maria, interrupting him ; “ arise, and I will shew you it’s interpretation.”

Hastily throwing a loose robe round him, and seizing his sword, the King accompanied Maria into the gardens; and two soldiers of the Royal guard, whom he hastily summoned, followed them. They were not long in reaching the Grotto, near which, listening with lowering brows, and beating hearts, to the conversation within, we must for a moment leave the Monarch and his paramour.

Don Henry had, on the previous evening, left his Brother's nuptial feast, full of sorrowful forebodings. He had discovered that the most precious secret of his heart, was in the possession of one, who of all others had equally the inclination and the power to make a dangerous use of it. He felt the slippery and dangerous ground on which he stood, at the Court of a cruel and treacherous Prince like Pedro; and that his personal safety could only be secured by instant flight. Still he could not leave the Queen exposed to so many dangers; since he well knew her life was unsafe in the keeping of her husband and of Maria; especially exasperated as the latter would feel at his rejection, and his departure. As these thoughts crossed his mind, Adelaide de Montalban passed him in the great corridor of the Palace, and he at once unfolded to her the enmity of Maria, and the danger of her mistress.

“ Alas,” said Adelaide, “ the good Queen and I have long, long been convinced that her heart is full of hatred and treachery towards her. But whither can she fly? how can she save herself?”

“ Beg the Queen,” said he, “ to grant me but half an hour’s conversation to-morrow, at the silver Grotto, at sunrise ; for it is too hazardous to speak to her for a moment when this she-devil, or her spies, are watching every movement. The hour and place I have named will secure us from interruption, and I may then be able to propose some mode of rescuing her Majesty from the perils which surround her. Promise me that you will propose this to her.”

“ I promise you faithfully, my Lord,” said Adelaide.

“ Then, fare thee well, pretty maiden,” added Henry ; “ for this conference has already lasted long enough for our safety.”

The next morning saw the Count de Trastamare at the rendezvous at the hour appointed ; and he had not long to wait the arrival of Queen Blanche. “ Count,” said the Queen, “ before we communicate further with each other, let me exact a promise from you, that, not now, nor ever, shall I hear from you any declaration of such a passion as that which you rashly hinted at in our last con-

versation ; and the indulgence of which, the laws of God and man alike prohibit.”

“ I own my fault, Madam !” said Don Henry, “ and entreat your pardon for the inconsideration and rashness of my conduct. My heart was full, and the conduct of Don Pedro towards your Majesty stirred it to overflowing. But I readily promise all that you can demand : you shall perceive nothing in my conduct towards you, but the most respectful deference, and the warmest solicitude for your welfare. My purpose in soliciting this interview, is to warn you that your life is in danger, and to point out to you the propriety of seeking safety by immediate flight.”

“ I know too well,” she replied, “ how precarious is my situation among the hollow hearts, and blood-stained hands, which crowd this Court ; but what new cause of alarm have you discovered ?”

“ Alas, Madam ! your bitterest foe has not only made me a tender of her affections, which I rejected with scorn ; but she has also discovered the fatal passion which already occupied my heart, and has, in no equivocal terms, informed me, that your Majesty’s life is in her hands, and threatened to exercise the power which she possesses.”

“ Alas ! alas !” said the Queen, “ guiltless as

I know myself, how am I environed with dangers through the crimes, and the indiscretions of others! How am I to save myself! Long since would I have taken shelter at my Father's Court, but that I had no means of escaping thither."

"Then listen to me, Madam," said the Count. "My brother, Don Tello, will this day depart with his suite to take possession of the Signiory of Biscay. Your Majesty may take your accustomed ride in the forest at the hour at which he passes through it, and then join his escort; where I can ensure you a hearty welcome. The King concerns himself so little about your movements, that before your flight can be discovered, you will be beyond the reach of pursuit. Arrived in the territories of my brother, the power of Don Pedro may be defied, and measures easily concerted for sending your Majesty to the Court of France."

"Dangers and difficulties attend your plan, Count," said the Queen, "but despair has seldom any alternative but a choice of evils; and I confess that I cannot discover any better mode of effecting my escape from the evils which surround me, than by the path which you have pointed out."

"Then," said Don Henry, falling on his knees, and pressing her hand to his lips, "do not hesitate to pursue that path which will lead you to peace and

safety. Fly, dearest Madam! fly from a cruel tyrant, who hates you; and a malignant rival, who is plotting your destruction!"

As he uttered this, a slight rustling was heard amongst the foliage which concealed the entrance to the Grotto. It was Maria de Padilla, who started when she heard the words with which the Count concluded, and had nearly discovered herself as she retreated. All, however, was in an instant perfectly tranquil; for with noiseless tread, and a heart which, although nearly bursting with the violence of its emotions, she scarcely permitted to beat, lest even its throbbing should become audible, she had stolen away to apprise the King of her discovery.

"Our untimely meeting, Count," said the Queen, "has startled even the feathered race from their nests among the bushes. As to the plan which you have devised for me, I will venture to pursue it, come what, come may; it may perhaps lead, as you promise me, to safety, but to peace, never! That is a word which hereafter may sound in the ear of Blanche of Bourbon, but to which her heart must ever be a stranger."

A deadlier paleness spread over the wan features of the Queen, as she uttered these words, and tears, not profuse and flowing,—

“The heart’s gentlest waters,
Lightening the fount they flow’d from;”

but in large heavy drops, slowly gathered beneath her eyelids, and fell upon her bosom.

“Say not so, gentlest Madam,” returned Don Henry; “all residences are not as dismal as the Castle of Valladolid; all hearts are not as cold and barbarous as Don Pedro’s. The vows which you have plighted to him, he has himself rendered null and void, and in the compass of the world, surely another will be found who will know how to estimate ——”

“No more, Count; no more of this,” said the Queen, interrupting him. “It has pleased Heaven to link me to Don Pedro by irrevocable ties. For yourself, rest assured that you possess my esteem, my gratitude, and even my affection,——”

“Say’st thou so, Traitress!” shouted Don Pedro, who had arrived only in time to hear the latter part of her answer to Henry. “Adultress! miscreant! serpent of France! here receive the reward of thy perfidy and shame!”

Thus saying, he passed his sword thrice through the body of the unhappy Queen, who fell at his feet bathed in blood. Don Henry, although unarmed, would have rushed upon him, but was instantly made a prisoner by the guard. With the

cold, Gorgon-like gaze of Maria de Padilla fixed upon him, his blood ran chilly in his veins at this hateful sight; his lips quivered, and for a moment he could have fancied himself undergoing the metamorphosis which the glance of Medusa is said to have effected in those on whom it was fixed.

“Sire!” said Maria, in an under tone to the King, as she raised his hand wet with the blood of his Queen to her lips,—“behold the traitor! what shall be *his* doom?”

“To the scaffold with him! to the block instantly!”

“Not so, my Liege, not so; the Bastard’s fate would but excite too much sympathy in Valladolid, where he has contrived to gain the people’s hearts; and his brother Don Tello would not suffer his death to pass unrevenged. Strip him of his titles, degrade him, banish him; and thus prolong his pangs for years, instead of the brief interval between the uplifting of the axe and it’s descent.”

“Thou counsellest wisely, my sweet Maria,” said the King; and then turning towards his prisoner, added,—“thank my mercy that I will not stain myself with thy bastard blood, traitor! but upon pain of death, instantly begone! nor let Castile be further polluted by thy presence. Depart not, however, as Count of Trastamare, but

simply, Henry de Guzman, the fruit and evidence of thy mother's infamy !”

“ Tyrant and murderer !” retorted the indignant Henry, “ I will fly from Castile, and even to the end of the earth to escape from the domination of such a monster as thou art.”

The King grinned fiercely, and raised his weapon, but his arm was restrained by Maria ; and his fears, and not his clemency, having at length triumphed over his thirst for blood, Don Henry walked uninjured, out of the custody of the guards.

Month succeeded month, and year rolled after year, and the blood of Blanche of Bourbon seemed to call for vengeance in vain. That vengeance was at length, however, fully and signally accomplished by a series of events, which are too familiar to the readers of French and Spanish history to require to be enumerated. Maria de Padilla, though loaded with the favours of Don Pedro, could not give him her heart, and the remembrance of her flagrant crimes and her unrequited affection, combined to bring her to an early grave ; whilst Don Pedro, after a reign of unexampled cruelty and oppression, was chased from his throne by his indignant subjects, and died by the hands of his deeply-wronged brother, Don Henry, Count of Trastamare, who subsequently wore his crown.

SHAKSPEARE'S SUPERNATURAL CHARACTERS.

He was the Soul of genius,
And all our praises of him are like waters
Drawn from a spring, that still rise full, and leave
The part remaining greatest.

JONSON.

It is one of the most striking peculiarities in the genius of Shakspeare, that, although he is eminently the Poet of Nature, and exhibits her with singular felicity in her ordinary and every day attire, yet that, when he gets "beyond this visible, diurnal sphere," he surpasses all other writers, in the extraordinary power and invention which he displays in the delineation of Supernatural beings. It has been justly remarked, that, in his most imaginary characters he cannot be so properly said to go beyond Nature, as to carry Nature along with him, into regions which were before unknown to

her. There is such an extraordinary propriety and consistency in his supernatural beings, and every thing which they say and do, is in such strict accordance with the character with which he has invested them, that we at once become, as it were, denizens of the imaginary world, which the potent art of the Poet has conjured around us; the marvellous merges into the probable; and astonishment and surprise are changed into intense interest and powerful sympathy. Shakspeare is the only Poet who effects this; at least, to the same extent. The magic of other writers pleases and surprises us; but in that of Shakspeare we are thoroughly wrapt up. We are as much under the influence of the wand of *Prospero*, as are *Ariel* and *Caliban*; the presence of the *Weird Sisters* on the blasted heath, arrests our attention as strongly as it did that of *Macbeth* and *Banquo*; and the predictions of the prophetic Spirits on the eve of the battle of Bosworth, ring as fearfully and as solemnly in our ears, as they did in those of the conscious usurper. The great secret of all this is, the wonderful art with which the character of these visitants from another world is sustained, and in which they are not surpassed by any of our Author's representations of mere humanity. *Ariel* is as perfect and harmonious a picture as *Miranda*,

or *Ferdinand*; and, above all, the *Witches* in “*Macbeth*” are creations on which the Poet has lavished all his skill, and exhausted all his invention.

The Supernatural machinery of which he makes the most frequent use, is founded upon the popular belief in Ghosts. This is a superstition which has existed in all ages and countries, and amongst all classes and conditions of men. There are many who affect to despise it, but it is scarcely too much to say that there never existed an individual who was not, at some period or other, under the influence of the feelings which such a belief excites.

The “Saint, the savage, and the sage,” the man of letters and the uninformed peasant; the child of Science, who can explain the structure of the universe; and even the Sceptic,—Hobbes, for instance, among many others,—who refuses to give credence to any written revelation of the will of the Creator; have all confessed that

“ There are more things in Heaven and earth,
Than are dream'd of in our philosophy.”

Hence this belief has become an engine of most potent influence in the hands of the Poet; since by it he could work upon the feelings of all man-

kind. The great Authors of antiquity, and those of Spain and Italy, and above all, those of the north of Europe, the countries of cloud and mist, the

“ Lands of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Lands of the mountain and the flood,”

where the phenomena of Nature are such powerful auxiliaries to a lively imagination, and a credulous understanding, all these have delighted in breaking down the barrier between the corporeal and the spiritual world, and in shaking our dispositions,

“ With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls.”

The most distinguished writers of our own age have not neglected to avail themselves of this popular Superstition, if such it must be called. Coleridge's “ *Ancient Mariner* ;” Lord Byron's “ *Manfred*,” and “ *Siege of Corinth* ;” and that masterpiece of the mighty Wizard of the North, the “ *Bride of Lammermoor*,” are proofs, amongst innumerable others, of the ability which our contemporaries have evinced, when they have ventured to lift up the veil which shrouds the secrets of the spiritual world.

It is, therefore, not surprising that Shakspeare should have enrolled these shadowy beings among his *Dramatis personæ*; or, that in his management of them he should have displayed consummate genius. The introduction to the entrance of the *Ghost* in "*Hamlet*," shows infinite taste and judgment. Just as our feelings are powerfully excited by the narration of it's appearance on the foregoing evening, the speaker is interrupted by "majesty of buried Denmark" once more standing before him:—

"The bell then beating One,——

But soft, break off!—look where it comes again!"

then the solemn adjurations to it to speak; the awful silence which it maintains; the impotent attempts to strike it; and the exclamation of *Horatio*, when it glides away,—

"We do it wrong, being so majestic,
To offer it the shew of violence,"

present to us that shadowy and indistinct, but at the same time, appalling and fearfully interesting picture, which constitutes one of the highest efforts of the sublime. The interview with *Hamlet* is a masterpiece. The language of this awful visitant

is admirably characteristic. It is not of this world. It savours of the last long resting-place of mortality ; “ of worms, and graves, and epitaphs.” It evinces little of human feeling and frailty. Vengeance is the only passion which has survived the wreck of the body ; and it is this passion which has burst the cerements of the grave, and sent it's occupant to revisit the “ glimpses of the moon.” It's discourse is of murder, incest, suffering, and revenge ; and gives us awful glimpses of that prison-house, the details of which are not permitted to “ ears of flesh and blood.” Whether present or absent, we are continually reminded of this perturbed Spirit. When on the stage, “ it harrows us with fear and wonder ;” and when absent, we see it in it's influence on the persons of the Drama, especially *Hamlet*. The sensations of horror and revenge which at first possess the mind of this Prince ; then his tardiness and irresolution, which are chided by the re-appearance of the Spectre ; and his fears, notwithstanding all the evidence to the contrary, that it may be an evil Spirit, which,—

“ Out of his weakness and his melancholy,
Abuses him to damn him,”

form one of the most affecting and interesting

pictures in the whole range of Shakspeare's dramas.

The Spirits of the murdered victims of the usurper *Richard*, are also admirably introduced; but they do not occupy so prominent a station in the Drama as the *Ghost* in "*Hamlet*." The apparition of *Julius Cæsar* in the tent of *Brutus*, is a brief but awful visitation, and the mind of the spectator is finely prepared for it by the unnatural drowsiness which possesses all the attendants.

The *Ghost of Banquo* exists only in the disordered mind of *Macbeth*; and we think that the effect would be prodigiously increased if the managers would listen to the opinions of the best critics, and forbear to present it before our visual organs. But what shall we say of the *Weird Sisters*, and of their unutterable occupation?

"How now, ye secret, black, and midnight hags,
What is't ye do?"

"A deed without a name!"

This is the true sublime; it is composed of the essential elements of sublimity; and the most highly-wrought description of their employment would produce an effect infinitely inferior to the

simple brevity of this reply. The mind wanders into the pathless field of horrible imaginings. From the moment that *Macbeth* encounters them on the blasted heath, he is impelled along his inevitable path by their spells. His mind is troubled with "thick-coming fancies;" his "face is a book where men may read strange matters;"—"Things bad begun, make strong themselves by ill:" until at length, he is

" in blood

Stept in so far, that, should he wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er!"

and his unearthly tempters complete their horrid task, and gain their prey.

The *Fairies* in "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*" are of a nature as essentially and distinctly different as celestial from infernal; or light from darkness. Even "that shrewd and knavish Sprite" *Puck*, is but mischievous only, not wicked; and *Oberon*, and *Titania*, and all their elfish troop are untainted with any fiendish attributes, and almost without any touches of mortality. The "delicate *Ariel*" is another still-varying creation of the same gifted pencil; made still more effective by it's

contrast with the monster *Caliban*; “that thing of darkness,”—“as disproportioned in his manners, as in his shape:”—

“Whose mother was a Witch; and one so strong
That could control the Moon, make ebbs and flows;
And deal in her command, without her power.”

But to do ample justice to all the Supernatural characters of Shakspeare, would demand a Volume, not an Essay; and however frequently we may have perused the magic page which “gives these airy nothings a local habitation and a name,” it is still untiring, and still new. And though the all-potent art which gave it life, and breath, and being, is extinct; though the charm be broken, and the power lost; yet still,—

“Our mighty Bard’s victorious lays
Fill the loud voice of universal praise;
And baffled Spite, with hopeless anguish dumb,
Yields to Renown the centuries to come!”

A NIGHT AT THE MERMAID.

AN OLD ENGLISH TALE.

“ ’TIS a dismal shower, good mine Host, and the night is black as Erebus; my steed, too, is as ill conditioned as I am, without some slight respite to his labour, to travel as far as Whitehall, whither my affairs call me. So that were your Hostelry as full of guests as London town is of sign boards, you must e’en find room to afford me shelter for an hour or two.”

“ In troth, Master,” replied the Host, “ ye have chosen a naughty night to travel in. But i’faith! my private chambers are all occupied by constant guests; and my public room is filled by a set of gallants, who choose this night in every week to make merry at the sign of the Mermaid.”

“ ’Tis wondrous hard, mine Host,” returned the Stranger, “ that a benighted traveller, and a loyal subject of her Majesty, should, in the centre of this ancient and hospitable City of London, and from so fair a Host as thou art, beg in vain for that

favour which would be freely granted to him by a wanderer of the desert. May I crave of thee at least this courtesy, to commend me to those gallants, and say that a Kentish gentleman, whom nightfall and the tempest have driven here for shelter, begs to know if he may warm himself at the same fire with them, without detriment to their merriment?"

The Host stared the pertinacious Stranger in the face, while he slowly unbarred the Inn-gate: for, during this conversation, the traveller had questioned on the outside, while the Host answered him through a small grating. "They are not such churlish curs as to deny thee that," said the latter, "although they have Players, and Poets, and ne'er-do-wells of all sorts amongst them. They drink too, plenty of Sack and Rhenish; and the silver comes at last, although sometimes it is over long in it's travels. No, no, they would not drive a night-foundered Stranger from the gates; and you, Sir, it is likely, will be wanting a flask of good wine to keep this raw night air from your stomach."

"It is the very thing, mine host," said the Stranger, as the man of flagons and puncheons was helping him from his steed, in the Inn-yard, "which I was about to crave of thee. But first

bear my message to thy guests ; and I will await their answer in the hall."

The Host, or, as we shall in future call him, Master Stephen Drawwell, disappeared at this bidding ; but soon returned with a message from his guests, to say that the Stranger was heartily welcome to their society. He then ushered him across a long corridor, and up a flight of steps into a spacious and lofty apartment where the gallants, of whom he had spoken, were assembled. A long table extended the whole length of the room, while an enormous wood fire blazed at each extremity. The floor was strewn with rushes ; a piece of state and luxury with which Master Drawwell ornamented his common room on this night of the week only ; and wax tapers were placed on various parts of the table ; which was also plentifully furnished with flasks and cups, bearing generous liquors of every quality.

The Stranger was kindly welcomed by the whole party, and was conducted to a seat at the right hand of the person who appeared to officiate as their President, or Chairman. A slight glance at the persons by whom he was surrounded, convinced him that he was in the company of no common men. They were, for the most part, plainly habited ; and many of them were now considerably under the

influence of the purple deity, to whom they had been sacrificing. But amidst the wild jollity and obstreperous mirth in which they indulged, he detected many brilliant sallies of wit; the most caustic touches of satire; and a profound acquaintance with the deepest mysteries of the human heart. After listening for some time with vacuity, and almost disgust, to a stale punster, he found him suddenly transformed into a man of brilliant genius; a dull person near him, whom his potations, and too great an indulgence in that fragrant weed which had recently been imported from Virginia, seemed to have reduced to a state of listlessness, at the inspiring call of some kindred spirit, discovered himself to be an accomplished scholar, and an observant and philosophical traveller; whilst a third, after singing a stave of a dull and senseless Madrigal, became engaged in a discussion, which drew forth from him a display of knowledge and eloquence, at which Demosthenes himself would have sat down in despair.

Such was the gifted but eccentric circle to which our Traveller found himself introduced. The President, to whose peculiar care he was assigned, was a thickset, and rather clumsily built person, with a round burly face; a high forehead; and eyes, whose uncommon expression of keenness and intelligence

was not impaired by the circumstance of one being considerably larger than the other. He seemed to be peculiarly well fitted for the jovial station which he occupied; for, as the flasks passed round the table, he pulled from them as long, and as hearty a draught, as any of the company; and, apparently, with less effect of ebriety than most of them. His conversational powers seemed of the highest order; and the sly satire, the fine humour, and the polished wit, which escaped apparently unconsciously from his lips, kept the table in a roar during the whole of the evening.

This vivacious Chairman soon found out that the Stranger had been in the army; "Ye have, doubtless, then," he said, "fought against the Don, Sir, in the Netherlands?"

"I have, Sir," replied the Stranger; "in the Netherlands, and in America."

"I had a scratch with him myself," said the Chairman; "when Lord Essex went over to Flanders, I was in good old Sir Thomas Stanton's Regiment."

"Indeed!" said the other, somewhat incredulously; "and may I ask your name?"

"You may, and learn it too," replied the dignitary of the Mermaid: "'tis Jonson."

"Jonson!" said the Stranger, who now felt con-

vinced that he was either gravely imposed upon by the Chairman, or that the wags of the Hostelry were laughing at him in their sleeves; " 'tis strange, but I was well acquainted with every officer in that Regiment, and do not recollect that there was one of that name."

" Officer!" shouted the other, and followed his shout with an obstreperous laugh; " No, no; Fortune placed me in the ranks. 'Twas a boy's freak; I thought that I should prefer handling a musket to a trowel, so I left the front of Lincoln's-inn-gateway for the palisadoes of Bruges."

A light broke in upon the Stranger's mind, which instantly brightened over his face; " Can it be?" he said; " I have heard of this story before; can you be the Poet, the Dramatist, Ben Jonson?"

" Aye," exclaimed a dozen voices from all parts of the room, " who but Ben? rare Ben! jovial Ben! honest Ben! immortal Ben!" and the mirth and conviviality were redoubled; while the Stranger, who felt like one who has unconsciously intruded into the presence of superior beings, was by turns awed and delighted by the persons among whom he found himself.

About the middle of the table was seated a person of a singularly saturnine and melancholy expression of countenance. His features, which

were somewhat of an Italian cast, indicated a fine intelligence, and a polished taste; but still there was something about them which repelled the advances of the most cordially disposed. He appeared considerably older than most of his companions; but led by a similarity of tastes and occupations, to mingle in their society. They seemed to regard him with extraordinary deference and respect, and to listen with attention and even reverence to all that he uttered; although every sentence which fell from his lips was imbued with the bitterest and most virulent personal satire. The praises and compliments which were heaped upon Jonson, in consequence of the Stranger's surprise, seemed greatly to discompose this personage. He listened to them in silence, and, after they had subsided, pursed his lips into a sardonic grin, while he addressed the Chairman in these words:—

“ Pray tell me, Ben, where does the mystery lurk?
What others call a *Play*, you call a *Work* !”

The sting in this line consisted in the fact of Jonson having lately published a volume of Plays, entitled “ *The Works of Benjamin Jonson* ;” which term was then considered ridiculously arrogant and pompous, although it has since been commonly

applied in the same sense. Some of the company were amused, but more were grieved, at this sally, as tending to damp their hilarity; but no one seemed more disconcerted than the person who was the object of it. At length, however, a lame man, at the lower end of the room, exclaimed, while a good-humoured smile mantled over his features,

“ The Author’s friend, thus for the Author says,
Ben’s Plays are works, while others’ Works are plays.”*

The momentary damp which had hung upon the spirits of the company, was dispelled by this sally; and one long loud peal of laughter and applause cleared away the gloom which had darkened round them.

“ Thanks! Uncle Willy!” said Jonson; “ thanks, my sweet Swan of Avon! A mad wag, my friend,” he continued, addressing the Stranger; “ he commenced his career with deer-stealing, and he has ever since continued the pilfering trade, by stealing away the hearts of all who know him.”

* As both these jeux d’esprit are anonymous, I have considered myself privileged to appropriate them as I thought proper.

“ Is it Shakspeare?” enquired the Stranger, in a tremulous tone.

“ ’Tis none but he,” returned Jonson; “ a kind youth, and a clever. He lacks the ancient tongues though; and he doth take most irreverent liberties with the wise rules of the Stagyrite: yet he knows in some sort to tickle the popular ear; and crowds will go to see his representation of a Shipwreck, although it be upon the coast of Bohemia, who do not comprehend a single one of the classical allusions in my Poetaster.”

“ Nay, nay, Ben,” said a keen-eyed, good-looking stripling by his side; “ thy Poetaster hath it’s praise, but match it not with the immortal works of my Godfather.”

“ I cry you mercy, young Master Davenant!” said Jonson; “ I knew not that thy quick ears were so close to my hasty tongue. But William, friend, have a care in future, when thou speakest of Master Shakspeare, that thou take not the name of *God* in vain.”

Jonson had now turned the laugh against his defender, who was supposed by many to be connected with Davenant much more closely than by the sponsorial tie. “ But ne’er mind, Master Shakspeare,” said Jonson, “ the lad is a proper person;

and hath more wit in his pate than was ever inherited from an Oxford tapster. But tell me, my heart of Warwickshire, when am I to carry thy little Judith to the baptismal font?"

"Right speedily, Ben," answered Shakspeare; "and then we shall see what rare present thou wilt bestow upon her."

"It shall be something," returned Jonson, "which it is fitting for a Poet and a Scholar to give; one who hath the tongues, and is skilled in the lore of ancient Greece and Rome."

"Give her some *latten* spoons," added Shakspeare; "and then, Ben, thou can'st translate them."

"A murrain upon thy word-torturing wit, Willy," replied Jonson; "thou perverter of language, and destroyer of the simplicity of syllables! But a truce to these wit-combats, as Master Fuller calleth them, and let us have a Catch. Here is Master Stephen Dowland just entering the room; and, by my faith! Master Matthew Locke with him. A Song, Master Locke! a Song, and that right speedily!"

Locke, however, had no sooner joined the party than he engaged in close conversation with Shakspeare, without paying any attention to the call of the Chairman. They were conversing upon a subject deeply interesting not only to themselves,

but to all posterity, for it was on the time and manner of bringing out at the Globe Theatre, a Tragedy, which the latter had written, and parts of which the former had set to Music, under the title of “*Macbeth*.”

“ He heeds me not, Master Dowland,” said Jonson; “ he and that Warwickshire carle are plotting some mischief, for their heads have never been under the same roof for the last six months, without coming into close contact.”

* * * * *

(*Left unfinished.*)

THE TREKSCHUIT.

IT was in the Autumn of the year 1824, on my return to England from a tour along the Rhine, that I found myself for the second time in the city of Ghent; and it was not without a feeling of very considerable interest and pleasure, that I revisited Flanders. I had seen most of the finest towns of Germany and France; but in picturesque and antique beauty, they were none of them to be compared with Antwerp; Brussels, the old part of the town; Malines; Bruges; and, above all, Ghent. The magnificent and venerable Cathedrals; the stately streets lined with Palaces, once the residences of the nobility of Flanders and Burgundy; although now, alas! let out into tenements, and the ground floors occupied by petty tradesmen; the Museums so richly adorned with the works of native Artists; and the sad and melancholy solitude of those once thickly populated thoroughfares, which nevertheless, retained, I thought, a solemn beauty about them; made a deep impression on

my mind. I will, however, deal candidly with my Readers; and confess to them, that ideas of a grosser, and less intellectual, character, mingled with my reveries, as I approached Ghent. I had been riding all day; it was long after sunset; and I thought of the Hotel des Pays Bas, and of the good cheer with which M. Doublet, the worthy Host, used to spread his table at the patriarchal Supper hour of nine. Although the viands were always excellent, and the wines of the most tempting quality, M. Doublet's hours at first puzzled me not a little. Dinner at one, and Supper at nine, were such plebeian meals, that I should have blushed to the very throat, had certain of my acquaintances detected me in the commission of such enormities. However, I recollected that if I chose to christen the first repast, Luncheon, and the second, Dinner, I should be sufficiently near to the hours set apart for such affairs in London; where, as is well known, it is the height of fashion to go without Dinner, and take a hot Supper.

I arrived in Ghent just in time to allow my physical organs to participate in the meal, with which I had been for some time past regaling my fancy. I sat down amidst a party of ten or twelve, and was received with that courtesy and cordiality, which, whatever John Bull may think of his own

hospitality, a stranger never meets with in such perfection, as on the Continental side of the Channel.

“ Monsieur is going to make some stay in this town?” said the person, who had been most assiduous in loading my plate with the best of every thing.

“ No,” I replied; “ I have already seen all that is most interesting in Ghent, and purpose starting for Ostend in the morning, by the *Trekschuit*.”

“ *C'est bien heureux*,” answered the Abbé, for such he was; “ that is very lucky, as we are all bent on the same expedition. There are eleven of us; we have hired the little *Trekschuit*—*La Ville de Bruges*,—for ourselves; and there is just accommodation for another passenger. If Monsieur will join us, I think I shall do no more than speak the sense of all, when I say that we shall be proud of his company.”

The Abbé's proposition was instantly and unanimously carried; and as I was travelling alone, I did not hesitate to accede to it.

“ Monsieur however,” said a young gentleman with dark hair, and a pale face, who sat opposite to me, “ should be made acquainted with the terms by which our party is bound together. If

he has ever sailed, or rather been towed, in the Trekschuit before,"—I nodded an assent,—“ he cannot have forgotten that, however pleasant he found the journey at first, the noiseless monotonous progress of the boat, and the flat and unvaried character of the scenery, oppressed him with insufferable weariness and ennui, long before he arrived at his destination.”

“ Of a surety,” I replied, “ I have not forgotten it; for my last journey from Ostend to Brussels, will long be remembered; though, at first, the Trekschuit pleased me well enough. Having been tossed about all the day before in a Steam boat, on the German Ocean, without being quite sure that I should not make up my final bed there; and the three things in the world, which, if I have any choice, I like least, being sea-sickness, explosion, and drowning,—I cannot decide which is the worst,—the Trekschuit appeared to me a very quiet and secure conveyance. But the day wore on, and there being still nothing to be seen, but the same straight banks of the Canal; the same plantations of cabbages and onions on each side of it; and the same dull taciturn crew, whose wits, if they had any, seemed spell-bound by the genius of the place; I even wished myself again beating backwards and forwards off the Foreland. If

then, ye have any device for mitigating the tedium of to-morrow's journey, there is no one will co-operate with you, more willingly than I shall."

"Then it is even this expedient," said my pale-faced companion, "which has been proposed by our reverend friend the Abbé, that each should narrate a tale for the entertainment of the company. This, with a plentiful supply of Rhenish and cigars; and such a dinner, to divide the morning from the evening, as even M. Doublet would not blush to lay before us, will perhaps make the Trekschuit to-morrow, a residence at least as agreeable as the Hotel d'Angleterre at Boulogne."

As the allusion to the Debtors' prison, which is thus designated, at Boulogne, on account of the number of our countrymen who do it the honour to take up their residence there, was intended to raise a laugh at my expense, in which it was successful, I readily promised also to assist in the plan of amusement proposed, and then applied myself with becoming alacrity to the completion of my meal.

An early hour the next morning saw us on the deck of *La Ville de Bruges*. As the Reader is to accompany us in our progress down the Canals, and as "all our tediousness" is 'specially reserved for him, I think that it will be only seemly and

decorous if I introduce him to our party. First then there is Myself;—" *fidelicet*, myself," as *Sir Hugh Evans* would say,—a beardless, briefless Barrister;—

" One foredoom'd his Father's soul to cross,
And pen a Stanza when he should engross."

I was ambitious to surmount my wig with a wreath of laurel; to introduce the nine Muses to the twelve Judges; to invest Apollo with a silk gown; and harness Pegasus to the Chief Justice's carriage. But I unfortunately found, that the two occupations did not harmonise, and I made all kinds of ridiculous blunders. I sent an Attorney a Volume of Poems with the Author's compliments; and despatched the case and opinion, which should have filled their place, to the Editor of the "*New Monthly*," requesting an early and favourable Review; the consequence of which was, that the Attorney sent me no more Briefs, and the next *New Monthly* contained some mighty pleasant verses,—to all but the subject of them,—entitled "*Verse-atility of Talent at the Bar*." I had resolved to spend my long vacation on the Continent this year, for the purpose of viewing foreign Courts of Law, and getting some insight into the

jurisprudence of other countries; and after attentively studying the works of Rubens and Vandyke, seeing how Judges and Barristers looked at the Theatres, and Spiel-houses; and pondering deeply on those abstruse legal questions which were suggested by the scenery on the banks of the Rhine; having accomplished all these desiderata, I was now on my return to Westminster-hall, with a wonderful acquisition of juridical knowledge in my cranium.

Next to me sat the Abbé; a jovial, rubicund, good-humoured, Priest, who was travelling on the affairs of the Church to Ostend; and as he was portly and well fed, and the weather intensely hot, the good father was in "a continual dissolution and thaw" throughout the journey. As I gazed in his face, and saw the whole huge mass of flesh, of which his person was composed, resolving itself into water, I began, good Protestant as I am, to have some faith in the doctrine of transubstantiation. He was a lively and merry, but withal, discreetly-conducted personage; evidently a man of learning and considerable talent; and one of the members of our little society with whom we would have least willingly parted.

The pale-faced youth, whom I have already mentioned, was a young Artist from Antwerp, on

his way to London. He was tall and handsome; but a close and unwearied enthusiasm in his application to his art, had evidently impaired his health. I soon entered into conversation with him, and found that he had travelled in Greece and Italy; had once visited Paris, solely with a view of going through the Louvre; and was now journeying to London, for the purpose of studying from the the Elgin Marbles. His great townsman Rubens was the god of his idolatry; whenever his merits formed the subject of conversation, his eye would kindle with unusual light, and his whole frame seemed animated by some extraordinary impulse. It is true, that he was apt to be a little intolerant of those who ventured to differ with him on this subject; but this is a fault with which I fear that we are most of us chargeable, when our favourite topic is undergoing discussion.

Opposite to me sat an Officer in the Prussian service, who had distinguished himself in the last campaign in Flanders; and was now conducting his Lady, the only female in our party, over the scenes of his former exploits. He had taken her to view the fields of Waterloo and Ligny, and the ramparts of Antwerp; and he was now about to inspect the fortifications of Ostend. He had proved himself a good Soldier, and was withal a

man of strong sense, but not uninfected with strong prejudices. He hated the French; believed that Prussia was the greatest, grandest, and most glorious kingdom in the world; and maintained that the battle of Waterloo was won by Blücher. He did not seem very fond of Catholics, and at first eyed the Abbé somewhat askance; but the good humour and lively manners of the Priest speedily triumphed over the reserve of the German, and before we had proceeded far on our journey, they were seated side by side, and were partaking very cordially of the contents of the same snuff-box.

* * * * *

The preceding Fragment, which thus is abruptly terminated in the MS., was originally intended to have had a second title, and to have been called, either "*The Decameron of the Canals*," or, "*Tales told in Flanders*;" and to have introduced about a dozen different narratives: several of which are contained in the present Volume, and the remainder are included in Mr. Neele's last work, the "*Romance of History*."—EDITOR.

HYMNS FOR CHILDREN.

I.

OH thou ! who sitt'st enthroned on high,
Ancient of Days ! Eternal King !
May Childhood and mortality
Hope thou wilt listen whilst they sing !

We raise our Songs, but, Oh ! to Thee,
What praise can mortal tongue impart ;
Till thou hast tuned to harmony,
That jarring instrument, the Heart ?

Then, Infant warblings in thine ear,
As sweet as Angel notes shall roll ;
For thou wilt bend from Heaven to hear
The still, soft music of the Soul.

Oh ! teach us some celestial Song,
Some note of high and holy joy ;
And that shall dwell upon the tongue,
And that shall all our Souls employ.

Then, Time shall hear, while Time is ours,
The Song of praise we pour to Thee ;
And Heaven shall lend us nobler powers
To sound it through Eternity !

II.

Oh Thou ! who mak'st the Sun to rise,
Beam on my Soul, illumine mine eyes,
And guide me through this world of care :
The wandering atom thou can'st see,
The falling Sparrow's mark'd by thee,
Then, turning Mercy's ear to me,
Listen ! Listen !
Listen to an Infant's prayer !

Oh Thou ! whose blood was spilt to save
Man's nature from a second grave ;
To share in whose redeeming care,
Woe's lowliest child is not too mean,
Guilt's darkest victim too unclean,
Oh ! thou wilt deign from Heaven to lean,
And listen, listen,
Listen to an Infant's prayer.

Oh Thou ! who wilt from Monarchs part,
To dwell within the contrite heart,
And build thyself a Temple there ;
O'er all my dull affections move,
Fill all my Soul with Heav'nly love,
And, kindly stooping from above,
Listen ! Listen !
Listen to an Infant's prayer !

III.

God of Mercy ! throned on high,
Listen from Thy lofty seat :
Hear, Oh ! hear our feeble cry,
Guide, Oh ! guide our wandering feet.

Young and erring Travellers, we
All our dangers do not know ;
Scarcely fear the stormy sea,
Hardly feel the tempest blow.

While our bosoms yet are young,
Kindle in them Love divine ;
Ere the tide of sin grow strong,
Take us, keep us, make us, Thine !

When perplex'd in danger's snare,
Thou alone our guide can'st be :
When oppress'd with deepest care,
Whom have we to trust but Thee ?

Lord ! instruct us then, and pour
Hope and Love on every Soul ;
Hope, till Time shall be no more,
Love, while endless ages roll.

IV.

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.—

Ecclesiastes, Chapter 12, v. 1.

Remember Him, for He is great,
And winds and waves obey his will :
The surges, awed by Him, abate,
And tempests at his voice are still.

Remember Him, for He is wise,
To mark our actions every day ;
To know what thoughts within us rise,
And notice every word we say.

Remember Him, for He is good,
He sent his Son to die for Sin ;
And the rich ocean of his blood,
Can cleanse and purify within.

Remember Him, for He is kind,
And will not frown the poor away ;
He heals the rich, restores the blind,
And listens when the humblest pray.

Remember Him, before the days
Of evil come, and joy is dim ;
While Time is yours, repeat his praise,
While Life remains, remember Him !

EPITAPHS.

I.

A Saint, a Wife, a Mother slumbers here,
To Heaven, to Husband, and to Children dear;
But Heaven, to which her chiefest thoughts were prone,
Too early claim'd, and made her all it's own.
Three infant pledges of pure love she left,
Unconscious they of how much good bereft;
Their tears may well be spared, they need not fall,
There's one whose heart hoards grief enough for all;
Who, but for them, as he bends o'er this stone,
Would long to make her peaceful grave his own.

II.

Good night! Good night, sweet Spirit! thou hast cast
Thy bonds of clay away from thee at last;
Broken the earthly fetters, which alone
Held thee at distance from thy Maker's Throne;
But Oh! those fetters to th' immortal mind,
Were links of love to those thou'st left behind.
For thee we mourn not; as th' Apostle prest
His dungeon pillow, till the Angel-guest
Drew nigh, and when the light that round him shone,
Beam'd on the prisoner, his bonds were gone:

So wert thou subject to disease and pain ;
Till Death, the brightest of th' angelic train,
Pour'd Heaven's own radiance, by divine decree,
Around thy suffering Soul, and it was free !

SONNET.

On reading the Remains of the late HENRY KIRKE WHITE.-

Yes, all is o'er ! the pangs which Nature felt,
Have thus subsided into dread repose ;
The feelings Genius only gives, and knows,
Nor soothe, nor sadden now ; nor fire, nor melt ;
How sadly and how soon Death's weltering wave
Closed o'er his honour'd head. Too lovely Rose,
Why in such open brilliancy disclose
Those buds condemn'd such cruel blight to brave ?
Was Genius', Virtue's, Learning's power too small
To snatch their votary from the silent grave ?
Ah me ! we toil through life, until the call
Of Death arrests us, impotent to save ;
The great, the good, the wise around us fall,
While Vice and Folly live, proud arbiters of all.

FRIENDSHIP.

From the French.

“ FRIENDSHIP ! to thee I raise my voice,
Love cannot equal thee ;
Thou art the object of my choice,
Oh ! come and comfort me !
Thou, like the roseate break of day,
Shinest, but dost not burn ;
Peace dwells with thee, and 'neath thy sway,
True happiness we learn.”

'Twas thus, when fifteen Springs their braids
Had woven, Laura spake ;
The gentle error of fair maids,
When their first vows they make.
Unto her Idol then she raised
A Temple, rich and rare ;
And, night and day, bright cressets blazed,
And odours rich burn'd there.

Only his features to express
A Statue was required ;
Had the Arts reach'd such perfectness,
T' achieve the work desired.
A master-piece of Art to choose,
To Phidias quick she went ;
All grandeur's forms, and beauty's hues,
Must in that form be blent.

The Artist Friendship's statue shew'd :
 How unlike what she sought !
 Simple, severe, of antique mode,
 With no soft graces fraught.
 " This is not he ! " she cried, " I spurn
 Your false and peevish art ;
 Would you from a true model learn,
 Behold him in my heart !

" There, stretch'd upon a bed of down,
 Slumbers a lovely child ;
 Behold the master whom I own,
 And serve ! " she said, and smiled :
 " Ah ! " said the Artist, " Beauty must
 That tyrant's vassal prove ;
 You come to me for Friendship's bust,
 And bid me copy Love ! "

LOVE AND BEAUTY.

A Fragment.

* * * * *

OH Love ! triumphant Love ! thy throne is built
 Where tempests cannot shake it, or rude force
 Tear up it's strong foundations. In the heart
 Thy dwelling is, and there thy potent spell

Turns it's dark chambers into Palaces.
Thy power is boundless ; and o'er all creation
Works it's miracles. So Pygmalion once
Woke the cold statue on it's pedestal,
To life and rapture. So the rugged soul,
Hard as the rifted rock, becomes the slave,
The feeblest slave of Love ; and, like the pearl
In Cleopatra's goblet, seems to melt
On Beauty's lips. So, when Apelles gazed
Upon Campaspe's eyes, her peerless image,
Instead of glowing on his canvass, bright
In all it's beauty, stole into his heart,
And mock'd his feeble pencil.

* * * * *

Love in the soul, not bold and confident,
But, like Aurora, trembles into being ;
And with faint flickering, and uncertain beams,
Gives notice to th' awakening world within us,
Of the full blazing orb that soon shall rise,
And kindle all it's passions. Then begin
Sorrow and joy : unutterable joy,
And rapturous sorrow. Then the world is nothing ;
Pleasure is nothing ; suffering is nothing ;
Ambition, riches, praise, power, all are nothing ;
Love rules and reigns despotic and alone.
Then, Oh ! the shape of magic loveliness,
He conjures up before us. In her form

Is perfect symmetry. Her swan-like gait,
As she glides by us, like a lovely dream,
Seems not of earth. From her bright eye the soul
Looks out; and, like the topmost gem o' the heap,
Shews the Mine's wealth within. Upon her face,
As on a lovely landscape, shade and sunlight
Play as strong feeling sways: now her eye flashes
A beam of rapture; now, lets drop a tear;
And now, upon her brow—as when the Rainbow
Rears it's fair arch in Heaven,—Peace sits, and gilds
The sweet drops as they fall. The soul of mind
Dwells in her voice, and her soft, spiritual tones
Sink in the heart, soothing it's cares away;
As Halcyons brood upon the troubled wave,
And charm it into calmness. When she weeps,
Her tears are like the waters upon which
Love's mother rose to Heaven. E'en her sighs,
Although they speak the troubles of her soul,
Breathe of it's sweetness; as the wind that shakes
The Cedar's boughs, becomes impregnated
With it's celestial odours.

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A THOUGHT.

THE shadow we pursue still flees us,
Fast pacing as we faster pace :
That which we flee from will not ease us,
By pausing in the fearful race.

Thus, Pleasure, vainly we implore thee
To stay thy flight, and longer bloom ;
And thus, Oh Death ! we flee before thee,
But only flee into the tomb !

EPIGRAM.

To a *Great Beauty*.

Believe me, my corpulent Fair,
I love your fat cheeks and full face ;
Oh my heart ! your eyes kindle love there,
And I sink in your melting embrace.

The poor buzzing fly does the same,
While yet inexperienced and callow :
First, burns his bright wings in the flame,
And then,—tumbles into the tallow !

**MISCELLANEOUS
PROSE AND POETRY.**

ORIGINALLY PRINTED IN VARIOUS PERIODICAL
PUBLICATIONS, AND NEVER BEFORE
COLLECTED.

Miss Vortex. A charming Nosegay! All exotics, I declare!

Jessy. No, Madam, neglected wild-flowers; I took them from their bed of weeds, bestowed care on their culture, and by transplanting them to a more genial soil, they have flourished with luxuriant strength and beauty.

Miss Vortex. A pretty amusement!

Jessy. And it seemed, Madam, to convey this lesson: not to despise the lowly mind, but rather, with fostering hand, to draw it from it's chill obscurity, that, like these humble flowers, it might grow rich in worth and native energy."

MORTON'S "CURE FOR THE HEART-ACHE."

THE VALLEY OF SERVOZ.

A SAVOYARD TALE.

Servoz ! sweet Servoz ! there is not a Vale
On Earth's green bosom nursed, so beautiful
As thou ! How lovely yon cerulean sky
Glittering with blue and gold, and all the charms
It canopies. The purple vines which feed
On thy rich veins ; the flowers whose fragrant breath
Sate the sense with sweetness ; the tall groves
With their eternal whisperings in thine ear,
Of blessedness and joy ; thy guardian fence
Of hills which o'er thee rise, Alp over Alp,
As though each peer'd above his fellow, anxious
To snatch a glance at thee ; and sweeter still,
Thy Vale's deep quiet, which no sound disturbs,
Save the sweet brawling of the silver Arve ;
The wild bee's hum ; the grasshopper's shrill note ;
And distant tinklings mingled with the lay
Which the swarth peasant o'er the furrow chaunts,
Echoed by village maids. But most I love
Thy Churchyard's grassy precincts : in such spots,
While the foot rambles, the soul treasures up
Truth's holiest lessons ; and as the green-sward
Springs freshest over graves, so there the heart
Brings forth it's kindest feelings, and distils
Dews precious as the drops which fall from heaven.

HENRY NEELE.

It was in the Summer of the year 1820 that, at
the close of a fine July day, I found myself, for

the first time, in the village of Servoz. This is a beautiful, quiet group of cottages, deposited, if I may use the term, in the bosom of the Valley from which it takes it's name, in one of the most romantic and secluded parts of Savoy. It is impossible for language to do justice to the delightful and varied scenery which surrounds it. That peculiar characteristic of Alpine views, the union of wildness with fertility, is here exhibited in a surprising degree. The Valley seems absolutely saturated with the sweetness and the fecundity of Nature. Flowers of the most brilliant hues and enchanting fragrance, and fruits of the most delicious flavour, abound in every part; in the middle is seen the river Arve, in some places leaping and foaming over the rocks by which it's course is impeded, and in others quietly watering the Valley. All around rise gigantic hills, the bases of which are clothed with vines; whilst midway extend enormous forests, and on their summits is a mantle of everlasting snow. At the time at which I was entering the Village, the whole scene was surmounted by a clear, blue sky, of whose glorious tints those who have never travelled out of England cannot have the faintest conception; and the setting Sun had thrown it's own radiant hues upon Mont Blanc; whose summit, even while I gazed upon it, became suddenly changed from a brilliant

white to a gorgeous red, and "Sun-set," as Lord Byron expresses it, "into rose-hues saw it wrought." This gradually faded away, exhibiting, as the Sun declined, the most exquisite variety of colour, until the brilliant white, which can be compared to nothing so well as to molten silver, resumed it's original dominion.

There is much truth in the maxim of Rousseau, that "*On s'exerce a voir comme a sentir, ou plutôt une vue exquise n'est qu'un sentiment delicat et fin.*" Certainly, the same scenes excite very different emotions in different minds; and even in the same mind at different moments. Be this as it may, at the time of which I am writing, I felt as fully persuaded as ever Sterne did, that I had a Soul; and, like him, could have defied all the materialists in the world to persuade me to the contrary. On arriving at such a place, the first objects of my research are the Village Inn, and the Church-yard; for from those places I gather the history of the spot, and get an insight into the minds and manners of the inhabitants. I see them in the house of mirth, and in the house of mourning; I mix with them in the pleasures, and in the business of life; and I learn how they support the intrusions of death, and what are their hopes beyond the regions of mortality. On this

occasion, not finding much to interest me at the Inn, I merely took some slight refreshment, and, disencumbering myself from the staff and wallet with which I had performed my journey, proceeded to take a ramble among the tombs. They were many and interesting. Here rested the Patriarch of the Village, gathered full of years and honours to his fathers. There, a modest stone told a simple but melancholy tale of an unfortunate Traveller engulfed in a glacier, as he was travelling these lonely, but dangerous, regions without a guide. Here the Soldier rested from the battle, and the Chamois-hunter from the chase. The gay ceased to smile, and the unhappy forgot to weep; Death garnered up his harvest here, and methought that there was among it food that might be wholesome and invigorating for the mind.

Amongst those memorials of the dead, there was one by which I found my steps irresistibly arrested: this was a heap of turf, surrounded by beds of flowers. It was undistinguished by any stone; but a wooden cross, of the rudest workmanship, was raised upon it, on which hung a chaplet of lilies. The cross was evidently some years old, but the lilies were fresh gathered, and blooming; and some young girls were watering the flower-beds which surrounded the grave. From them, and

from others of the neighbours, I gathered the history of this tomb. It was a simple tale: but I have seen tears raining plenteously at it's recital, from some of the brightest eyes which ever borrowed from southern suns their lustre, and their warmth; and big drops roll down the faded cheeks of age like juices forced from fruits which seemed withering upon their stalks.

If the rustic annalists of the Valley of Servoz may be credited, there never moved upon the earth a being more exquisitely beautiful than Annette de la Cluse. Her form was tall, and moulded to the finest symmetry; her eyes black and sparkling; and her hair of the same colour, and almost of the same brightness. Some of the rural connoisseurs of the Village considered her face too pale: as it has been described to me, it must have been beautifully fair; but the sun of that climate, which usually marks the daughters of the Valley for his own, had so slightly tinged her cheeks with the rose, that it was only in moments of extraordinary animation and feeling that it was perceptible; and during the last year of her life it entirely vanished. Her disposition was pensive, but far from gloomy; and during the little Village festivals, with which the Romish Calendars abound, a more gay and hearty laugh was seldom heard

than Annette's. Still, she loved solitude and seclusion; and although Literature had not at that time unfolded its treasures to the Valley, yet her mind appeared to be informed by the beauty and sublimity of the scenes which surrounded her, and she—

“ Found tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.”

To these qualities were added, a sweetness and kindness of heart which endeared her to every one, and which continues to keep her memory piously cherished to the present moment.

With such attractions it is not to be wondered at, that by the time that Annette had attained her seventeenth year her admirers should be numerous. Her course of studies not having included the science of coquetry, it was not long before she avowed that her affections were fixed upon Victor de St. Foix; and those worthy neighbours, who there, as in more polished districts, kindly took upon themselves the office of deciding upon the fitness of the match, were unanimous in their approval of her choice. Victor was Annette's senior by only a few months, and his taste and habits were, in most particulars, congenial with

her own. It is true that he possessed the more masculine habits of enterprise and intrepidity : none could track the Chamois to his haunt among the Alps with a keener eye, and a surer foot ; and in leaping from rock to rock, he was rivalled only by the mountain rivulet. The Traveller who enquired for a hardy and intelligent guide was always recommended to Victor ; and when circumstances of danger or difficulty occasioned the Villagers to rally together, he was invariably among the foremost, and frequently filled the post of chieftain. Still his heart found room for the softer emotions, and when at evening he stole to Annette's side to tell her some melancholy tale of the Traveller overwhelmed by the avalanche, or lost among the torrents ; or, when he warbled, in unison with her, some of those sweet Savoyard melodies which are often heard among the Vallies, the tears would rush into his eyes, and the hardy mountaineer seemed metaphosed into a " soft carpet Knight." One Song which they used to sing most frequently together, and which the Villagers have distinguished by their names, I transcribe as it was recited to me by the Host of my Inn. The words of the original, when accompanied by the simple and beautiful melody to which they are sung, are irresistibly touching and affecting. The following version

sinks infinitely below it's prototype, but I have endeavoured to preserve the sentiment :—

“ For thee, Love! for thee, Love!
I'll brave Fate's sternest storm;
She cannot daunt, or chill the hearts
Which Love keeps bold and warm:
And when her clouds are blackest, nought
But thy sweet self I'll see;
Nor hear amidst the tempest aught,
But thee, Love! only thee!

For thee, Love! for thee, Love!
My fond heart would resign
The brightest cup that Pleasure fills,
And Fortune's wealthiest mine;
For Pleasure's smiles are vanity,
And Fortune's fade or flee;
There's purity and constancy
In thee, Love! only thee!

For thee, Love! for thee, Love!
Life's lowly vale I'll tread,
And aid thy steps the journey through,
Nor quit thee till I'm dead:
And even then, round her I love,
My shade shall hovering be;
And warble notes from Heaven above,
To thee, Love! only thee!”

In this manner they passed the morning of their

lives, until the day arrived which had been fixed upon for their union. In such a place as Servoz this was an incident of considerable interest and importance; and almost the whole population of the Village, young and old, contributed to swell the retinue, which proceeded with decorous hilarity towards the simple, but venerable, Church of St. Pierre. A troop of young girls advanced first, strewing flowers in the path of the joyous procession; these were succeeded by some youthful peasants of the other sex, who filled the air with rustic, but by no means tasteless, Music; the Bride followed, "blushing like the morning," supported on her right by her aged Mother, and on her left by the Bridegroom; their relatives and intimate friends came next, and a numerous party of peasantry brought up the rear.

This was on one of those bright Summer mornings, the splendours of which the inhabitants of more northern climates never behold, even in imagination. It was the hushed and breathless hour of noon, and all nature seemed reposing from the meridian heat, except the bridal party, who were protected from it by the shadow cast by a gigantic Alp across their path. Suddenly a strange sound was heard above them, like the noise of an avalanche, and a quantity of stones

and rock descended upon their heads, without, however, producing any serious consequences. They were, nevertheless, induced to quicken their steps, but before they had proceeded ten paces further, a tremendous explosion like an awful thunder-clap was heard. The enormous Alp under which they were walking was seen rocking to and fro, like an aspen tree shaken by the wind; and before the whole of the party could escape beyond it's reach, it had precipitated itself into the Valley, and choked up a little lake which lay immediately under it's brow; while huge blocks of granite were hurled about in all directions, and the dust produced by rocks thus dashed violently against each other, concealed for awhile the extent of the calamity. Annette had instinctively caught her Mother's hand, and hurried her beyond the reach of danger; but when the party had arrived at a place of safety, and the tremendous convulsion of nature had subsided, the wailings of distress at seeing their habitations crushed, and their fields and vineyards laid desolate, were many; though more were the exclamations of joy at beholding that their children and friends had escaped unhurt. On a sudden a heart-rending shriek was heard, followed by a fearful cry of "Where is Victor?" From Annette those sounds proceeded, who, as the

cloud of dust disappeared, had cast a hasty glance around, and perceived, among the groups who were felicitating each other on their escape, all but Victor! Instantly the whole party was in motion; the cloak, the hat, and some of the bridal ornaments of Victor were found, while some mangled reliques of his corpse told too soon, and too certainly, his miserable fate.

Annette, who followed as fast as her failing limbs would allow her, heard their exclamations of despair, and sank senseless upon the earth. Every effort that kindness and pity could suggest was used to recover her, but for months they could scarcely be said to restore her suspended animation; for the state of listless inanity in which she remained was much more nearly allied to death than life. At length, however, she regained the use of her corporeal powers; but, alas! her mind had wandered from its dwelling. She would often, after remaining inactive for hours together, hurry suddenly to the Church, and there, standing before the altar, repeat that part of the Matrimonial service which is uttered by the Bride; then she would wait for a few moments silently, as if expecting to hear another voice, and at length, looking round on the empty Church, utter a dreadful groan, and hurry away. At other times she would wander through the Church-yard, count over the tombs

one by one, and read all the inscriptions, as if she was seeking one which she could not find ; while it was observed that she was always more cheerful after having been employed in this manner. “ He is not dead ! I shall see him soon ! ” she would say ; but as her path homewards led by the ruins of the fallen mountain, the dreadful recollection seemed to rush upon her brain, and she was often carried away from the spot as senseless as at first. The only occupation which seemed to impart any tranquillity to her mind was singing, or playing upon her lute, those little melodies which she and Victor used to chaunt together. The Song which I have translated was her especial favourite ; and while singing the last verse she would look upwards, and, after she had finished it, remain silent for some time, as if she expected that the promise which it contains would be literally fulfilled, and that she should hear her lover’s voice responsive to her own. In her wanderings she was continually penetrating into paths which were unknown to the Villagers generally, and some of these are now among the most beautiful spots pointed out to the curious traveller. At length she found a little Valley, composed of only one green field, and one gurgling rill which stole through it, and surrounded by picturesque rocks, which were clothed with a profusion of beautiful trees ; larches,

firs, pines, and others of every imaginable form and hue. She sat down by the margin of the little stream, and sang her favourite ballad. The first two verses she warbled, or rather recited, in a low mournful tone, but when she came to the last, she raised her voice to the highest compass; and her tones, which were always beautiful, were described by those who followed her unseen, at a short distance, to be, on this occasion, of seraphic sweetness. As she elevated her voice, all the echoes with which that romantic spot abounds, were awakened; and every rock warbled, as it were, a response to her Song. Now the sound rolled over her head deep and sonorous; now it became softened and mellowed among the hills; now it returned as loudly and distinctly as at first; and at length died away in a faint and distant whisper. Annette clasped her hands in rapture; her eyes were raised to Heaven; tears, but tears of joy, stole down her cheek; her beautiful face, which sorrow, and sickness, and insanity, had robbed of many of its charms, seemed now more beautiful than ever, and her whole form appeared animated by something which was more than earthly. “ ’Tis he!—’tis Victor speaks!—

‘ Thou warblest notes from Heaven above,
To me, Love! only me!’

My Love! my life! where art thou?—I have sought thee long; my brain is strangely troubled, but now we will part no more.—I see thee beckon me!—Victor! my love!—I come!—I come!” The echoes answered “Come!—come!” Annette lifted her hands once more to Heaven; then sank upon the earth, and her Spirit fled for ever!

Since that time the spot on which she died has gone by the name of “Annette’s Vale.” The Villagers think it haunted, and never enter it but with uncovered head and naked feet; but more from reverence than fear, for who would fear the gentle Spirit of Annette de la Cluse? The Chamois which escapes into this place is in a sanctuary; and the flowers which grow there are never plucked but to strew upon Annette’s grave; in every murmur of the wind, in every rustling of the leaves, are heard the voices of her and her lover; and, above all, the echoes among those rocks are listened to with awe, as the Songs or the conversations of Victor and Annette!

“NEW EUROPEAN MAGAZINE,” 1822.

THE POET'S DREAM.

Oh! then I see Queen Mab hath been with you.—

SHAKSPEARE.

IT was in the forenoon of a sultry autumnal day, in the year 1638, that a person apparently about five and thirty years of age, handsomely, though not gorgeously clad in the costume of the country, and mounted upon a mule, was seen traversing the wild and romantic road which leads from Sienna to Rome. A slight glance at the Traveller would enable the intelligent observer to discover in him “more than marks the crowd of vulgar men.” His forehead was high and pale; and his hair, of a light flaxen colour, flowed in rich ringlets over his shoulders. Although his complexion was considerably tinged by the southern suns which he had encountered in the course of his travels, it was evidently originally very fair, if not pale; and, together with the oval face and bright blue eyes, de-

noted a native of a more northern region than that which he was traversing. His countenance was singularly beautiful, and it's mild and beneficent expression was shaded, but not impaired, by the pensive air which, apparently, deep study, or perhaps early misfortune had cast over it. His height was rather above the middle stature; and his form displayed that perfection of symmetry which we usually look for in vain in nature, but mark with admiration in the works of Phidias and of Raffaele. He was followed by a servant, also mounted upon a mule, and both were taking the high road to the "eternal City," from which they were distant about two days' journey.

The day was sultry, and as the road then wound among some of the most precipitous and difficult passes of the Appenines, the Travellers appeared to experience considerable fatigue. It was with no slight degree of pleasure, therefore, that they descried, at a small distance onwards, a thick forest of pines, which promised a shelter from the noontide heat, as well as an opportunity of exploring the contents of their wallet, for the purpose of procuring refreshment. Having arrived there, they dismounted; and their morning's meal, consisting of bread, fruit, cheese, and wine, was soon spread before them; and nearly as soon dis-

appeared before such appetites, as a long fast and a fatiguing journey never fail to create. The superior Traveller then having desired his servant to lead the mules to a little distance, prepared to take a short slumber previous to resuming his journey.

He had not long resigned himself to sleep before his ever restless brain began to teem with certain vague and shadowy forms, which at length settled into a vision of consummate beauty. He fancied that he beheld a beautiful female figure bending over and gazing at him, while her features were expressive of the utmost astonishment and delight. Once she appeared to speak, and the wonder with which he beheld the exquisite loveliness of her form and features, was lost in that excited by the ravishing melody of her voice. He extended his hand towards her, and endeavoured to grasp her own; she gently eluded him, smiled, and dropping a small scroll of paper, vanished from his sight, while our traveller, with the effort which he made to reach it, suddenly awoke.

He started on his feet, scarcely believing that what he had seen could have been a dream, so strong and vivid was the impression which it had made upon his senses; but his wonder was wound up to the highest pitch at perceiving a scroll, ex-

actly resembling that which he had seen in his dream, lying at his feet. He snatched it up eagerly, and read the following lines:—

“ Occhi stelli mortáli
Ministri di miei mali
Che'n sogno anco mostraté,
Che'l mio morir bramate.
Se chiusi m'uccidete,
Aperti che farete !”

which, in our own less mellifluous language, would read nearly thus:—

“ Eyes! ye mortal stars which shed
Fatal influence on my head,
Bidding me in omens know,
That to you my death I owe,
If when closed ye've power to slay,
Hide me from your opening ray !”

Doubting the evidence of his senses, he read the scroll over again and again, before he thought of calling his servant, and endeavouring to gather from him such particulars as might assist in unravelling the mystery. The account which he received from his domestic only involved him in new perplexities. From him he learned that, during his slumber, a carriage, containing two elegantly dressed females, had stopped close to the place where his master was sleeping; that the youngest

of the two, whose description, as related by the servant, corresponded in the most minute particulars with the figure which he had seen in his dream, alighted; and after gazing for some time upon the handsome sleeper, addressed certain interrogatories to the domestic, which, from his ignorance of the language in which they were conveyed, he was unable either to comprehend, or answer; that she then hastily wrote some lines upon a scroll, which she threw at his master's feet; and, seeing the latter move, re-entered the carriage, which immediately drove off with the utmost rapidity.

"You would know her again, Horatio?" enquired the wondering Traveller.

"Aye, Sir," returned the other, "even were her beautiful face veiled; let her but utter three words, and I shall remember her voice. Not even when I saw the Lady Alice Egerton play in the Masque at Ludlow Castle, and heard her call upon Echo in her Song, till I wondered how so sweet an invitation could be resisted, did I feel my soul stealing out at my ears so delightfully; for even she, craving your honour's pardon, was but a chirruping wren to this Italian nightingale."

"Saddle the mules instantly," interrupted his master, "let us lose no time in overtaking her."

“ Oh Sir! that were a fruitless chase, for the carriage has had a long start before us, besides being drawn by four of the fleetest horses in Italy.”

“ Nevertheless, speed will do no harm, Horatio; and unless we travel at a quicker pace than that at which we have been proceeding this morning, I shall scarcely reach Rome in time for the Cardinal Barberini’s Concert to-morrow evening.”

They accordingly resumed their journey, the *ci-devant* sleeper much marvelling at the extraordinary incident of the day, and puzzling his brains, for he was deeply learned in metaphysics, to account for the phenomenon by which that which was hidden from his visual organs, was revealed to his “ mind’s eye” during the hour of slumber. He was, however, unable to arrive at any more satisfactory conclusion than that contained in two lines of his favourite author, which he uttered aloud, turning round to his valet,—

“ There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in our Philosophy.”

They now travelled with the utmost expedition, but, as our Readers will have guessed from the information of Horatio, without overtaking the fair

and mysterious fugitive. Nothing occurred during the remainder of their journey beyond the usual routine of eating, drinking, sleeping, and travelling ; and sometimes the necessity, however unpleasant, of dispensing with the three former items, until they arrived at Rome. Here our Traveller's first care was to find out the residence of his friend Holstenius, keeper of the Vatican library, and with whom he had become acquainted at Oxford, where the Italian had resided for three years.

The meeting of the friends was cordial and affectionate. " But we have no time to lose," said Holstenius, " the Cardinal's Concert has already commenced, and he is in the utmost anxiety to see you : you will find there a distinguished party, who are drawn together principally in the expectation of meeting you."

" I fear," said the Englishman, half smiling, and at the same time lowering his brow, as to the present day is done by literary men, when they feel, or affect to feel, offended at being made what they call " a shew" of ; " I fear that the attraction will cease when the cause of it is seen and known. But who are these, friend Holstenius, to whom I am to be exhibited this evening?"

" Amongst others, to the Marquis Villa, who has just arrived from Naples," said the other.

“What! Manso?” exclaimed the Englishman, his features brightening as he spoke, “the friend of the illustrious Tasso?”

“The same,” resumed Holstenius; “also the Poets, Selvaggi and Salsilli; the famous Grotius, the Swedish Ambassador to the Court of France, who is here on a visit to his Eminence, and whom I believe you met at Paris; the Duke de Pagliano; and the Count di Vivaldi. Adriana of Mantua, Sister to the Poet Basil, and her daughter Leonora Baroni, who are reported to be the finest singers in the world, have also arrived at Rome expressly to be present at this entertainment.”

The momentary gloom which had gathered on the Englishman’s features, was immediately dispersed; he expressed the utmost delight at the prospect of mingling with the lofty spirits who were assembled under the Cardinal Barberini’s roof; and, after having suitably attired himself, the friends were not long in finding their way to the Cardinal’s Palace.

Here they found the illustrious owner, although nephew to the ruling Pontiff, and possessing, under him, the whole delegated sovereignty of Rome, anxiously looking amongst the crowd at the door for his transalpine guest. When he recognised Holstenius and his friend, he darted out, and

grasping the latter by the hand, heartily bade him welcome. He then led him up a magnificent staircase lined with attendants in the most gorgeous liveries, and blazing with innumerable lamps, until he arrived at a splendid Saloon, in which the distinguished company were assembled. Here, after a momentary pause, he elevated his voice and announced in an exulting tone to the anxious auditory, the presence of “il Signor Milton.”

“Onor à l’altissimo Poeta!” exclaimed a hundred voices. Fair hands strewed flowers upon his head, and noble palms were extended emulous of his grasp. The learned and the famous, the rich, and the young, and the beautiful, all crowded with expressions of admiration and delight around the illustrious Englishman. The Poet Salsilli, was the first who gained possession of Milton’s hand, and fixing upon him a steadfast look, he recited in a loud voice the following lines:—

“Cede Meles; cedat depressa Mincius urna,
Sebetus Tassum desinat usque loqui.

At Thamesis victor cunctis ferat altior undas;
Nam per te, Milto, par tribus unus erit.”

“Meles and Mincius! now more humbly glide,
Tasso’s Sebetus! now resign thy pride;

Supreme of rivers, Thames, henceforth shall be,
His Milton makes him equal to the three."

At this unexpected sally, the place rang with applauses, which had scarcely subsided before a voice from the other end of the room, which was recognised to be that of the Poet Selvaggi, exclaimed:—

"Græcia Mæonidem, jactet sibi Roma Maronem;
Anglia Miltonum jactat utrique parem."

"Greece! vaunt your Homer's, Rome! your Maro's fame,
England in Milton boasts an equal name."

The thunders of applause were redoubled, and Milton began to feel himself under some embarrassment, as to the mode of returning such extraordinary and unexpected compliments, when he was relieved by his entertainer, begging him to seat himself by him, and entering into close conversation with him.

"I am told, Mr. Milton," said the Cardinal, "that you are a proficient in the divine art of Music."

"I can claim but a slender acquaintance with the Science," answered the Poet; "but I have ever been peculiarly susceptible of it's power, and

have found my feelings swayed by it in an extraordinary manner, upon more than one occasion. To my Father, who was deeply accomplished in the science, and to my friend and countryman, Henry Lawes, whose fame, I believe, is not unknown even in this classic land of song, I am indebted for what little knowledge I may possess."

"Nay, nay, Mr. Milton, your knowledge is somewhat greater than you will allow. The celebrated Leonora Baroni, who has just left the room, but will soon re-enter it, had, shortly before your arrival, delighted the company, by the exquisite manner in which she sang a divine melody composed by herself, to suit some still diviner words of yours, which fully prove that you have the soul and the feelings of the most inspired musician." He then recited with energy and propriety, although with a strong foreign accent, the following lines:—

"Blest pair of Syrens, pledges of Heaven's joy!
 Sphere-born harmonious Sisters, Voice and Verse!
 Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd power employ,
 Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce;
 And to our high-raised phantasy present
 That undisturbed Song of pure consent,
 Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd Throne
 To him that sits thereon,

With saintly shout and solemn jubilee ;
Where the bright Seraphim in burning row,
Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow ;
And the cherubic host, in thousand quires,
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires ;
With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout, and holy psalms,
Singing everlastingly !”

The conversation between the Cardinal and his illustrious guest was here interrupted by the entrance of Adriana, of Mantua, and her daughter, Leonora Baroni. Milton's heart throbbed, and he drew his breath thickly, as he fancied that he recognised in the figure of the latter, the fair one who had brightened his dreams among the Appenines. The first glimpse of her face confirmed him in this idea, and he was about to rush to the harp at which she had seated herself, and the strings of which she was trying, when a moment's reflection convinced him of the impropriety of such a proceeding. The resemblance might be accidental, or it might be produced merely by his own heated imagination. At length she struck the strings, and played a low sweet prelude with such exquisite delicacy, and yet such masterly execution, that the whole company were entranced in wonder, and none more so than the Poet. She then raised her voice, whose divine tones thrilled to his very soul.

The air was her own composition, and of matchless beauty; but what was his astonishment at recognising in the Poetry to which it was adapted, the very words which were inscribed upon the scroll. He rose from his seat, and approached the beautiful songstress. Like his own Adam, he “hung over her enamoured.” He forgot his hopes, his ambition, his travels, the place in which he was; he forgot even the extraordinary way in which he first became acquainted with her. The recollection of all was lost in the intense delight with which he listened to the flood of melody which she was pouring forth. At length she came to the concluding verses of the Madrigal:—

“ Se chiusi m’uccidete,
Aperti che farete !”

and as she warbled the last line, turned her head, and beheld the bright blue eyes of the Poet, as though his whole soul was concentrated in those two orbs, gazing upon her. A slight tremor shook her frame; a deadly paleness overspread her face; and she sank senseless upon the ground.

This incident created general confusion. The whole company crowded round the harp, and beheld the beautiful Leonora, pale and senseless,

in the arms of the Poet, while her Mother was chafing her temples in an agony of distress. At length Milton and Adriana succeeded in conveying her out of the room into the open air. It was a bright and beautiful night. The moon was riding high, shedding a mild pale light upon the waters of the Tiber, the venerable monuments of the Eternal City which frowned upon it's banks, and the lofty summits of the Appenines towering in the distance. The night-wind crept from leaf to leaf, and gently agitated the waters of the river; while from a neighbouring grove the notes of the nightingale were borne upon the breeze. The genial influence of the air, and the fragrance of a thousand odorous flowers, which bloomed around her, soon revived Leonora. The first objects which she beheld, on opening her eyes, were those "*stelli mortali*," which had been the cause of this confusion. A smile played upon her lip, although a deep blush overspread her cheeks, as she said to Milton, "I believe, Sir, we have met before, and I hope you will pardon the inconsiderate folly of an enthusiastic girl."

"Talk not of pardon!" interrupted the Poet, "divine Leonora! talk of joy, of rapture! The heavenly form which I fancied an insubstantial

vision is corporeal, is vital, and I hold it in my arms!"

We believe the lady blushed, and gently disengaged herself, according to the received dicta of decorum on such occasions. The Poet, however, still retained enough favour in her eyes, and in those of her Mother, to be allowed to accompany them home, and to obtain permission to call upon them on the following morning.

"And may I," said Adriana, as the Poet was taking his leave, "may I beg to know, Signor, to whom we are so greatly indebted?"

"My name," he answered, "is Milton."

"Milton!" exclaimed both ladies, as with a feeling of solemn awe, they retreated for a few paces, and then, with a deeper feeling of enthusiastic admiration, advanced, and each took hold of one of his hands. A crimson blush suffused the face of the beautiful Leonora at recognising, in the handsome sleeper, the mighty Bard, by whose writings she had been spell-bound for many an hour of intense and delighted interest. He had not yet given to the world his master-work, and thus rendered the high encomiums of Selvaggi and Salsilli no hyperbole; but that scarcely less glorious emanation of his genius, *Comus*, as well as *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Lycidas*, and some of his

immortal Sonnets, had already appeared, and were read, and justly appreciated both in England and Italy. The permission which he had obtained to appear the next day at their residence, was now transformed into something between an injunction and a petition. He then took a reluctant leave for the purpose of rejoining the assembly at the Cardinal's, and apologising for the absence of the syrens, which was readily excused on the score of the illness of the younger one.

The remainder of the evening passed without the occurrence of any incident, the record of which would be likely to interest our Readers. The Poet, whose fine person and fascinating manners had more than confirmed the feelings of admiration which his divine writings had created, retired, the theme of universal eulogy. He retired, but not to rest; the image of Leonora haunted his waking thoughts, and formed the subject of his dreams: again he fancied himself among the Appenines; again the fairy figure approached and dropped the scroll; again he stretched forth his hand, but more successfully than before; he reached hers; when suddenly the scene changed, and he found himself in the Saloon of the Barberini Palace, with the beautiful songstress, pale and senseless, in his arms.

He arose feverish and unrefreshed; and while the divine tones of Leonora's voice seemed to be still ringing in his ears, he seized his pen, and composed the following elegant Latin verses:—

“AD LEONORAM ROMÆ CANENTEM.

Altera Torquatum cepit Leonora poetam,
Cujus ab insano cessit amore furens.
Ah miser! ille tuo quantò felicior ævo
Perditus et propter te, Leonora foret!
Et te Pieriâ sensisset voce canentem
Aurea maternæ fila movere lyræ;
Quamvis Dirçæo torsisset lumina Pentheo
Sævior, aut totus desipuisset iners;
Tu tamen errantes cæca vertigine sensus
Voce eadem poteras composuisse tuâ;
Et poteras, ægro spirans sub corde, quietem
Flexamino cantu restituisset sibi.”

Which have been thus translated by Dr. Symmons:—

“TO LEONORA SINGING AT ROME.

Another Leonora's charms inspired
The love that Tasso's phrensied senses fired;
More blest had been his fate were this his age,
And you th' inspirer of his amorous rage.
Oh! had he heard the wonders of your song,
As leads your voice it's liquid maze along;

Or, seen you in your Mother's right command
The Lyre, while rapture wakes beneath your hand ;
By Pentheus' wildness though his brain were tost,
Or his worn sense in sullen slumber lost,
His soul had check'd her wanderings at the strain ;
The soothing charm had lull'd his stormy brain ;
Or, breathing with creative power had driven
Death from his heart, and open'd it to Heaven."

These lines were despatched by the Poet early in the morning to Leonora, and he himself was not long in following. His second interview with the fair syren was deeply interesting to both. The charms and talents of Leonora made an impression on the heart of the Bard, which he found himself unable to control; and in the feelings with which the former now regarded Milton, there was less of admiration for the Poet, than of affection for the handsome and accomplished Englishman who sat beside her. Our Readers, therefore, will not be surprised to hear that this visit lasted long, and was quickly succeeded by another and another. The ladies shortly afterwards leaving Rome for Mantua, Milton escorted them to the latter place, and fixed his temporary abode there, where his attentions to Leonora became still more marked. The keen apprehension of Adriana soon detected the state of their hearts, but the feelings which

the discovery awakened in her own, were by no means of an unmingled character. The accomplishments, both mental and personal, of her Daughter's suitor had gained the admiration and esteem of the Mother; but his transalpine birth, and heretical creed, presented obstacles to the union, which, although to her they did not appear insuperable, would, she feared, be deemed so by other members of the family, and especially by her Son; who was an officer in the service of the Republic of Venice, a bigoted adherent to the Church of Rome; of fierce and ungovernable passions; and accustomed to rule with despotic authority in all the concerns of the family. When, therefore, Milton formally announced himself to Adriana, as a suitor for her Daughter's hand, she did not affect to disguise her own approbation of the proposal, but informed him that it would be necessary that Leonora's relations, and especially her Brother, should be consulted. Milton, who was not ignorant of the temper and character of the soldier, felt much chagrined at this intelligence, but proposed to take a journey to Venice immediately, for the purpose of advocating his suit in person. The entreaties of Adriana, who anticipated dangerous, if not fatal consequences, from so abrupt a proceeding, induced him to relinquish

his design. She undertook to break the matter to her son by degrees ; but, as she had no doubt that the first intelligence would bring him, foaming with fury, to Mantua, she advised Milton to withdraw himself for a short time from that city. This advice the Poet determined to adopt ; especially as he had lately received several pressing invitations from the Marquis Villa to visit him at Naples. His parting interview with Leonora was of the most tender description ; vows of eternal fidelity were made on both sides ; and sighs, and tears, and protestations, were lavished with even more than amatory prodigality.

At Naples the Poet was received with open arms by Manso. This fine old man, who had been the friend and patron of Marino and of Tasso, bestowed on the still more illustrious Bard who now visited him, the most flattering marks of distinction. He acted as his *cicerone* during his stay in Naples ; conducting him through the Viceroy's Palace, and all the other public buildings which usually attract the notice of strangers ; and also introduced him to the circle of his friends, comprising the most illustrious and distinguished men in Naples. The manners and conversation of Milton were such as to make him a welcome guest wherever he went ; and to Manso in particular the

Poet's society became every day more fascinating. That he was a heretic appeared to him to be his only fault, and this he considered as more a misfortune than a crime. Manso's Epigram on this subject is well known:—

“ Ut mens, forma, decor, facies, mos, si pietas sic,
Non Anglus verum herclè Angelus ipse fores.”

And though the pun in this distich seems to defy translation, yet, as Dr. Symmons has attempted it, we give his version for want of a better:—

“ With mind, form, manners, face, did faith agree,
No Angle but an Angel would'st thou be.”

All the attractions of the society and scenery of Naples did not, however, make Milton forgetful of Leonora. He wrote to her often, and fervently; and it was from this place that he addressed to her those beautiful Italian Sonnets, which we find amongst his Poems. To these he received the most tender replies; accompanied, however, with the unwelcome intelligence that her brother had declared himself hostile to their union, and had uttered threats of personal violence to Milton if he persisted in his suit. The Poet, in answer, renewed his protestations of unaltered love, and declared his determination never to resign her but

with his life. He told her that her brother's threats could not daunt him ; and that his heart, although easily subdued by love, was bold enough to encounter any danger ; which sentiments we find beautifully expressed in the following Sonnet:—

“ Giovane piano e simplicette amante,
 Poi che fuggir me stesso in dubbio sono
 Madonna a voi del mio cuor l'humil dono
 Farò divoto ; io certo a prove tante
 L'hebbi fedile, intrepido, costante,
 De pensieri leggïadro, accorto e buono ;
 Quando rugge il gran mondo, e scocca il tuono,
 S'arma di se e d'intero diamante.
 Tanto del forse, e d'invidia sicuro,
 Di timori, e speranze, al popol use,
 Quanto d'ingegno, e d'altor valo vago,
 E di cetra sonora e delle muse.
 Sol troverete in tal parte men duro,
 Ove Amor mise l'insanabil ago.”

“ Lady! to you, a youth unknown to art,
 Who fondly from himself in thought would fly,
 Devotes the faith, truth, spirit, constancy,
 And firm, yet feeling temper of his heart ;
 Proved strong by trials for life's arduous part.
 When shakes the world, and thunders roll on high,
 All adamant, it dares the storm defy,
 Erect, unconscious of the guilty start ;
 Not more above fear, envy, low desire,
 And all the tyrants of the vulgar breast,
 Than prone to hail the heaven-resounding Lyre,
 High worth, and genius of the Muse possess :

Unshaken, and entire, and only found
Not proof against the shaft, when Love directs the wound."

Milton continued to reside at Naples for about a month, during which time no event occurred worth recording; except that one night as he was returning to his own lodgings from the Palace of the Marquis, he received a wound in the back from a stiletto. He hastily drew his sword, and faced his adversary, whom he found to be a tall thin figure in a mask. The contest was short, and would have proved fatal to Milton, for the assassin was his superior, both in strength and skill, had not a party of the Police come up just as he was on the point of being overpowered. The villain made one desperate, but unsuccessful, aim at Milton's breast, and then fled with incredible speed. His pursuers were unable to overtake him, but his mask having dropped off during the contest, it was hoped that he might yet be identified and secured. A strict search was set on foot the following day, but no trace of him could be discovered. Milton's wound was slight, and soon healed; and the only consequence of this encounter was a determination on his part, whenever he ventured into the streets of Naples at so late an hour, to go less ostentatiously ornamented; for he had worn, suspended

round his neck, by a gold chain, a portrait of Manso set in diamonds, which had been presented to him by that nobleman, and which, he had no doubt, had tempted the cupidity of the robber.

Our Poet had passed a whole fortnight without receiving any letters from Leonora, although he had, during that period, written repeatedly and anxiously to her; when, dreading the worst from her brother's violence, he determined to proceed immediately to Mantua. He took a sorrowful leave of his friends in Naples, especially of Manso, with whom he left as a parting gift those fine Latin verses, in which he has immortalised his noble friend.

On his arrival at Mantua, he hastened to the residence of Adriana. He enquired if Leonora was within, and heard with rapture that she was in the little apartment, which was called her Music-room. He resisted the anxious importunities of the domestic, who admitted him, to suffer him to announce him, determining to enjoy the surprise which his arrival would occasion. He softly ascended the staircase, and arrived at the door of her apartment. As he approached, he heard sighs and weeping. The door was half open, and as he leaned gently forward, he was surprised at seeing a tall thin male figure seated by the side of

Leonora. His surprise was changed into horror, when, on looking in his face, he recognised the features of the assassin who had assaulted him in the street of Naples. He grasped his sword, and was about to spring upon him, fearing that he would commit some violence upon Leonora, when he saw the latter take the assassin's hand, and kiss it fervently. Horror rooted his feet to the ground: he drew his mantle closely over his face, so as to cover every part of it except his eyes, while he listened in breathless anxiety to the following dialogue:—

“Why,” said Leonora, “why will you talk thus cruelly? If you love me no longer, at least pity me!”

“Pity you! pity one so utterly lost! Even Heaven itself, all merciful as it is, withholds its pity from the damned.”

“Alas!” she sobbed, “I have committed no crime.”

“No crime!” he exclaimed; call you it no crime to love a wretch like this? an Englishman! a heretic! one who has even visited the infamous Galileo in his dungeon.”

“And, yet, Antonio,” she said, “he is brave, and wise, and kind, and generous; can it be a crime to love such an one, dear *Brother*?”

Milton started! Antonio turned round; the Poet, placed in a dark recess, with his face and form muffled in his cloak, would have escaped his observation, but his eyes flashing with the fires of fury and horror, arrested the attention of the bravo.

“ ’Tis he! ’tis he!” exclaimed the latter: “ I know that fiend-like glare; hell and heresy are in it. Unhand me, Sister, or, by Heaven, the stiletto, when it enters his breast, shall be reeking warm from your own.”

He sprung like an emancipated tiger from the grasp of his Sister, and rushed towards Milton, “ Oh! spare him! save him!” exclaimed Leonora. She rushed between them as the stiletto was raised in the act to strike, and her bosom formed at once a shield for that of Milton, and a sheath for the fatal weapon.

She sunk upon the ground, bathed in blood; and even the monster who was the author of this tragedy was moved. “ Support her,” he said to Milton, “ help me to hold her up.”

“ It is in vain! all is in vain!” shrieked the Poet; as he clasped her hand, and gazed earnestly in her face. She fixed her eyes upon his until they closed. One gentle pressure of his hand; one slight quivering of her lips; and then the temple of the immortal Spirit was an uninhabited ruin.

Antonio fled howling from the chamber of death; and Milton sunk upon the bosom of the murdered beauty. We have but little to add. The feelings of the unhappy Adriana may be better conceived than expressed. She survived her daughter but twelve months, and ended her days in a Convent. Milton, when the first paroxysm of grief had subsided, resolved to travel into Italy and Greece, in order to divert his melancholy. The troubles, however, which just then broke out in England, made him abandon this design and return to his native country; "For I esteemed it," said he, "dishonourable for me to be lingering abroad, even for the improvement of my mind, when my fellow citizens were contending for their liberty at home."

The death of Leonora made a deep impression on the minds of all classes; and the superstitious used to dwell with awe upon the extraordinary fulfilment of the prophecy contained in the verses which she had inscribed upon the scroll. Those "*stelli mortali*" had literally proved the cause of all her ills, and ultimately of her death; and the eyes of Milton were for a long time compared to the heel of Achilles; as the only part neglected, and the part which was destined to prove fatal.

"HOMMAGE AUX DAMES," 1825.

TOTTERIDGE PRIORY.

A REVERIE IN HERTFORDSHIRE.

WERE you ever, my dear Reader, at the village of Totteridge? If not, put your horse to your gig this moment; drive past the pleasant villages of Holloway, Finchley, and Whetstone; and, turning sharp round to the left, you will find a green lane, so quiet, so rural, so solitary, and such a declivity, that you will stand as fair a chance as any man in the world of breaking your neck, or getting your throat cut, before you get to the end of it. Supposing neither of those interesting incidents were to occur, you will find at the end, a long straggling Village, scarcely containing a dozen houses, but extending perhaps over a couple of miles of ground. There are several houses here of rare antiquity; but the spirit of modern innovation and improvement has found its way among them, and a parcel of trim dapper brick and stone fronts, in the modern style of building, have made

their appearance, and stare the ancient denizens of the place out of countenance. The most interesting of the old houses is the Priory ; said by the inhabitants to be of an age which I dare not mention to my incredulous Readers. However, it is certainly of no modern date, but a gothic ecclesiastical structure, built in the style which was most prevalent in this Island in the reign of Elizabeth. The cowled Monks, the bare-foot Friars, the chaunted Mass, the solemn Vespers, alas ! alas ! all these have disappeared ; and, instead of them, melancholy change ! you meet with nothing but happy countenances, pleasant conversation, cheerfulness, and hospitality.

But, this is rambling from the main object of my Paper. My indulgent Readers, however, know my way, and will pardon it. I had not been long under this roof, before I learned that the house had formerly been occupied by the celebrated Lord Chesterfield, the prince of diplomats and dancing-masters. This information I acquired from my worthy Host, with whom I was sitting, *tête-à-tête*, after dinner. Strangely enough, it's effect, aided, I suppose, by the wine which I had drunk, was to set my body at rest, and my mind at work. My corporeal eyelids closed over the organs of vision suddenly, as if they had a

weight of lead upon them, but instantly "my mind's eyes" opened, and I found myself still occupying the same chair, at the same table, in the same room; but my Host was gone; and instead of him, I found standing near me an aristocratically-looking gentleman, of fifty years of age, perhaps, or, "by'r lady, some threescore." I instantly knew this person to be no other than my Lord Chesterfield. He was dressed most fastidiously, in the fashion of the period to which he belonged. He wore a long flowing peruque, most elaborately powdered; a blue coat, with a velvet collar, and enormous buttons; a waistcoat which, in our degenerate age, would be assigned only to persons of the dimensions of Daniel Lambert; and a frilled shirt, with lace ruffles; round his left leg was tied the riband of the Garter, while he held a cocked hat in his right hand, and a gold-headed cane under his left arm.

This courteous, but antiquated figure saluted me civilly, but coldly; and I returned his attentions in the same manner. He, however, continued bowing so long,—bowing, as our friend Richard Martin, M.P. would say, like a Master in Chancery,—that I plainly perceived his intention was to bow me out.

"Pardon me, my Lord," said I; "but this is my domicile for to-night."

“ Exceedingly happy to see you, Sir,” he replied ; “ but you must be aware that this mansion is not your property.”

“ Nor yours, either, my Lord, I apprehend, now, whatever it may have been a century ago. I take the liberty of presuming that it at present appertains to my friend, Mr. Dashville.”

“ And pray, Sir, who is Mr. Dashville?” said the Spirit, peevishly.

“ Will you taste his wine?” said I, handing him a glass, “ and then you may give something of a guess at him.”

“ With all my heart,” returned his Lordship. “ It is a hundred years since I tasted wine, and therefore it is no wonder that I feel rather thirsty. —Excellent ! excellent !” he added, after emptying his glass. “ I have no doubt that Mr. Dashville is a most worthy gentleman ; and, if you please, we’ll drink his health.”

We now got very sociable, and I could not help informing his Lordship of my late interview with Ben Jonson ; but it had not the effect which I anticipated.

“ Ben Jonson,” he said, “ was a clever man, but he was a bear ; and besides that, he frequented taverns, and kept low company.”

“ My Lord !” exclaimed I, in a tone of sur-

prise, "the company which he kept was composed of Shakspeare, Spenser, Fletcher, Donne,——"

"No matter for their names," interrupted he; "they were vulgar fellows, not fit for a man of fashion to think or talk of. We keep aloof from all such."

"Really, my Lord," said I, "I am surprised that a fine gentleman like yourself, should have ever condescended to put your foot into so unfashionable a place as the grave."

"True, true; 'tis an unfortunate necessity. There is good company there, though, could one but keep it select. But, pardon me, Sir, you are most hideously clothed."

Thus saying, he turned me round, adjusted my hair so as to look as much like a peruque as possible; flung some of his own powder upon it; and then proceeded to pull my linen and waistcoat about, even to the operation of tearing.

"Hold! hold! my dear Lord!" I exclaimed, in a tone of supplication. "I shall never be able to shew my face in Hyde Park, or Bond-street, if you go on in this manner. We dress in a very different style now, from what you and your contemporaries did."

A smile of serene contempt passed over the features of the defunct Peer, as I made this ob-

servation, and I could plainly perceive that all his dead blood was roused. He, nevertheless, managed to master his emotion as well as a dead man could be expected to do it, and proceeded.

“ I dare say that is very true,” said he; “ for I have seen most awful changes in the fashions, as exemplified by the various occupants of this house, who have usually been persons of *bon-ton*. In the first family which succeeded me, the pink of fashion was the heir. He was of the real Mr. Jessamy breed. He had passed a twelvemonth in Paris, where he acquired a becoming contempt for his own country and it’s manners; and learned just nothing at all of the country which he visited, but a few phrases of the language, with which he so managed to lard his conversation, as to render it unintelligible to a native of either nation. He was always seized with a violent spasmodic affection if he passed a filthy fellow of a ploughman or a haymaker; and once kept his bed for five weeks with a violent cold, brought on by the circumstance of a person in a wet great coat having sat down in the same room with him. He was a gentleman of very tender and sympathetic habits; although he once discharged his whole household, because he found a bottle, containing a favourite cosmetic, broken, and could not discover the indi-

vidual author of the accident. He at length died of immoderate grief for the loss of a favourite monkey, to whom he bore a great resemblance, and with whom he was on terms of extraordinary intimacy. The two animals were so much alike, that, were it not that the one wore a tail, and the other a sword, it would have been difficult to discover the difference.

“ By the time that the next tenant took possession, the fashion had materially altered. Logic and disputation were the order of the day, and all our fine gentlemen were infidels. The Bible was considered as the most facetious book in the world, and the most immoderate laughter that I ever heard, was that roared out over the story of Balaam and his ass. The occupant of the Priory, although he did not believe in the existence of his own soul, yet, like Hobbes, he paid the compliment to those of others, by believing that they revisited the earth after death, and he was consequently most dismally afraid of apparitions. He died one night of excessive terror, caused by a friend who shewed his kindness and his wit, by arraying himself in a white sheet, plastering his face, and proceeding with a lighted taper in his hand, into his bedchamber.

“ The house was now shut up for some time, and

reported to be haunted ; nay, the ghost of our free-thinking friend is said still to walk in it's most ancient chambers. At length it was bought cheap by a dashing young fellow, who drove his own four-in-hand, at a time when that accomplishment was considered the very *acmé* of aristocratical education. The Coronet was not worthily surmounted, except by a coachman's cap ; the gold stick, the Field-marshal's baton, and the Steward of the Royal household's wand of office, were considered as worthless baubles, in comparison with a Jehu's whip ; and the seat nearest the Throne was a station neither so enviable, nor so honourable, as the top of a coach-box. The gentleman, however, who tenanted the Priory, soon finished his career ; for, on turning one evening short round with his four greys down Totteridge-lane, he was thrown from ' his high estate ;' and picked up lifeless, and ' weltering in his blood,' like Darius of old."

" A most melancholy termination, my Lord," said I, " of such an ambitious and well-spent life. But pray who succeeded the Charioteer ? I suppose some character of a similar stamp ?"

" No, no," replied the loquacious ghost ; " the Charioteer had nearly outlived the fashion of which he was the breathing mirror, and when the young Honourable Tom Hardfist took possession of these

premises, boxing was the order of the day. No person without a swelled lip, and a pair of black eyes, could presume to take his seat in the House of Peers; nay, the blue riband itself was considered an inferior distinction to the black eye. Even the Ladies shared in the general mania; and as we all know that in that sex there is not so beautiful a feature as black eyes, so that those who had the misfortune to be born with blue or hazel, had now a short and easy means of remedying the defect, and becoming at once handsome, and in the fashion. Totteridge Priory was now converted into a boxing arena. All the most eminent pugilists of the day exhibited their science there to the great delight of the proprietor; until one day, Mr. Hardfist received such a severe blow upon his chest, that he was obliged to take to his bed, and, after lingering two or three weeks, died in great agony."

"A most extraordinarily varied succession of tenants, my Lord," said I; "and although I am no great admirer of your system of fashion and manners, still I cannot hesitate in giving it the preference over all that you have enumerated as following after it. But pray, who filled the vacant seat of Mr. Hardfist?"

"Nay, nay," said the noble ghost, "we shall be getting too near the present times, my friend;

and I do not like to talk scandal even in my grave ; so, good evening to you."

"Nay, nay," said I, starting up, and knocking down two or three glasses, "I cannot part with you so easily."—This effort broke my reverie ; and, on opening my eyes, I perceived no one near me, but my Host.

"What is the matter?" said he : "I hope you have enjoyed your nap?"

"My nap!" I exclaimed, "I do not understand you ; where's Lord Chesterfield?"

"Lord Chesterfield!" was the ejaculation in reply ; "I have seen no such person."

By degrees I recovered my recollection ; and, as an atonement for breaking the glasses, I was obliged to narrate my dream at the tea-table. Such as it is, I told it ; and such as it is, I give it for the perusal of my fashionable Readers.

"NEWS OF LITERATURE," 1826.

THE
SHAKSPEAREAN ELYSIUM.

A FEW evenings ago, after I had spent several hours in the perusal of Shakspeare, and while my mind was occupied in reflecting upon that amazing genius which had "exhausted worlds, and then imagined new," one of those reveries to which I have lately been subject, stole over my senses. I fancied myself seated in a crazy boat, upon a sluggish stream, over which a sturdy fellow of a waterman was rowing me. "Whither are you carrying me, my friend?" said I.

"To the other world!" he replied, in a gruff voice, which caused a thrill throughout my whole frame.

"To the other world!" exclaimed I; "pray on what part of it do you intend to land me?"

"I have orders," said he, "to take you to the Shakspearean Elysium."

This was a place of which I had never heard before; and I therefore begged him to explain himself more fully.

“Why, Master,” said he, “you must know that this Shakspeare created a world of his own; and filled it, moreover, with such a vast variety of characters, that, when their appointed times came, Pluto declined admitting them into his dominions; saying, that he had no room for them, unless he turned out his own subjects: this place was, therefore, created purposely for their reception, in which, as in the other, there is both an Elysium and a Tartarus. All the characters invented by the Poet are sent to Elysium; excepting the very few that he has ill drawn, which, together with his bad puns, his bombast, and his indelicacies, are despatched to Tartarus; and also, excepting his historical personages, who, being natives of the real substantial world above, are, of course, under the dominion of Pluto.”

“Indeed,” said I, “this is a rare place to visit; but although you, saving your presence, are marvellously ill-favoured, you do not exactly answer the descriptions which I have read of that grim ferryman, Charon.”

“No,” said he, sulkily; “I am not exactly he, although my occupation is similar: I am the *Boat-*

swain mentioned in the "*Tempest*," and fill this office at the instigation of an old brute of a Neapolitan lord, named *Gonzalo* ; who prophesied that I should be hanged in the other world, and has done all he could to make me wish myself so in this."

By the time that my Ferryman had told me thus much, our boat had reached the shore. The first thing that I did upon landing was to look out for that "gentleman with three heads," as *Mrs. Malaprop* calls him, Cerberus. Instead of him, however, I found a good-looking mastiff with only one head upon his shoulders, who turned out to be no other than our friend *Crab*, in the "*Two Gentlemen of Verona*." I soon afterwards learned that *Bottom*, the Weaver, whose fondness for volunteering his services on all occasions, my Readers must be aware of, was very anxious to fill this situation ; as he said that he could boast of having, at least, two heads ; namely, the one with which he was born, and the ass's head which Master *Puck* had fixed upon him. The qualifications of *Crab* were, however, considered superior, and *Bottom* was dismissed to Elysium.

Seated upon the Throne of these infernal regions, instead of Pluto and Proserpine, I found Tragedy and Comedy. The former saluted me with a very

condescending bend of the head; and the latter, with a bewitching smile, pointed out to me the gate of Elysium. I entered, and after recovering from the rapture which the delicious atmosphere, and the enchanting scenery excited, I looked around in search of some human object of curiosity. I found the place very thickly populated, and the inhabitants split into various small groups and parties. The first of these which I encountered, consisted of six or seven persons who were seated round a table in an arbour, and were eating and drinking, and making very merry. I soon found out that they were of that class of characters, now no longer in existence, so admirably portrayed by the great Poet, called Clowns, or Fools. *Touchstone*, "one that had been a Courtier," was in the chair; and around him were ranged *Launcelot Gobbo*; the bitter and sarcastic, yet, withal, kind-hearted Fool in "*King Lear*;" the merry singing Clown in "*Twelfth Night*," who made such irreverent sport of the cross garters of *Malvolio*; *Pompey Bum*, in one particular, the greatest of them all; the *Shepherd's Son*, and *Costard*; besides several others of inferior eminence. I also found this Company pestered by a troublesome fellow, whose object it evidently was to get ad-

mitted among them, but who took much pains to persuade them that he despised them immensely, and considered himself infinitely their superior. This person, whom they at length permitted to join them, I discovered to be *Apemantus*. The *Grave-digger* in "*Hamlet*" I learned had long been desirous of making one amongst them; and at last, having made them a present of a goblet made out of the skull of *Yorick*, the King of Denmark's Jester, a noted man of their fraternity in his time, he was voted in with acclamation. I soon found that *Touchstone* was the orator and oracle of the circle; and he had just finished his dissertation upon the seven causes, and was reading them a Lecture upon things in general, at the time that I approached the party.

After leaving this facetious group, I joined a party of Supernatural beings. Amongst them I found that mischievous fellow *Puck*, pretending to make violent love to one of the *Weird Sisters*. The grim lady appeared to be much flattered by his attentions, and was cooking him a delicate dish of Bat's liver, baked; which she proposed that he should wash down with a cup of Baboon's blood. The waggish Elf, however, was continually pestering her, by pinching her hips, pulling her beard,

and riding away on her broom-stick. *Caliban* was sprawling on the lap of his mother *Sycorax*, who kissed his lips, patted his cheeks, and fondled the foul monster like a baby. Tall ladies are said to be fond of little gentlemen, and accordingly I found that *Hecate* had been guilty of the abduction of Master *Peasblossom*, the favourite of *Queen Titania*, and head-scratcher to *Nicholas Bottom*. This small Adonis seemed by no means proud of the lady's attachment, and was, for a long time, vainly plotting his escape; until a humble-bee flying past them, he sprang upon it's back, and rode away merrily to Fairy-land.

I next met two ill-looking, yet evidently blustering fellows, moving along at a quick, stealthy pace, and casting many an alarmed look behind them; and about a hundred yards in the rear, I encountered a brace of sturdy-looking old Gentlemen, one of whom carried a leek, and the other a cudgel in his hand. These were indications sufficient to inform me that the first-mentioned pair were those valorous military gentlemen, *Ensign Pistol*, and *Captain Parolles*; and that their followers were the wholesome disciplinarians, *Lafeu* and *Fluellen*.

Soon afterwards I found two persons in close

consultation, whose scowling brows, darkened countenances, and heaving bosoms, denoted much mental affliction. They were weighing clouds, and measuring ants' legs; casting up cyphers, fathoming the profundity of a puddle, and taking the dimensions of a freckle on a lady's cheek, which they viewed through a powerful magnifying glass. The result always appeared to astonish and distress them exceedingly. I knew the first by his black visage and martial air, to be *Othello*; and guessed that the other was his fellow-dupe and brother-sufferer, *Leontes*.

Lear, *Hamlet*, *Jaques*, and *Timon* seemed to be very close associates. *Timon* was giving a vehement description of his sufferings, mental and bodily, when he was interrupted by *Lear*, who asked him how many daughters he had? and the querist shook his head incredulously, when he was answered that he had not any. *Master Slender* passed by them, scratching his head violently; upon which *Jaques*, with tears in his eyes, begged him to desist, saying that the small animals he was annoying, being "native burghers" of his land, had as much right to inhabit there, as he had to occupy the ground upon which he stood. *Slender* thought he was laughing at him, and said that

he would have him up before his cousin, *Robert Shallow, Esquire*, a Justice of the Peace, upon which *Hamlet* told him that he was “a very, very ——peacock!” and bid him go to a Nunnery.

I continued walking on, and soon afterwards found myself on the banks of a stream which was of a very different colour from any that I had ever seen before. I at first imagined that this must be *Lethe*, or a branch thereof, and I afterwards learned that the latter had originally been the case; but that such was the antipathy between things *Shakespearean* and *Lethean*, that as soon as the first of our Author's characters entered these *Elysian fields*, the river shrunk from it's channel, and at length left it completely dry. Every one was much puzzled what to do with the deserted bed of the river, until, at the suggestion of *Falstaff*, it was filled with sack and sugar. I was, therefore, not much surprised to find that worthy knight and his associates seated on it's banks, with wooden bowls in their hands, where they were joined by several strangers, of whom *Sir Toby Belch* was the chief, and he soon became a favourite with his brother knight. *Shallow* came up to them, and very gravely remonstrated on the dissoluteness of their lives; but finding that they would not leave their potations, he joined them, saying that as he was in the Com-

mission, he might probably be useful in preventing a breach of the peace. On this hint *Dogberry* and *Verges* joined the party ; alleging, that as they were the Prince's officers, they could execute his worship's warrant if necessary. *Sir Hugh Evans* sat himself next to *Falstaff*, saying, that it was unbecoming Christian men to follow such depraved courses, but that if they would just give him one cup of Sack, he would drink to the amendment of their lives.

The next change that " came o'er the spirit of my dream " placed me among a group of Ladies. There I found *Rosalind* and *Beatrice* chatting very familiarly ; only I thought that the gentle, though mirthful, spirit of the former seemed occasionally to shrink at the bitterness of her companion. *Imogene* and *Viola* were walking, arm in arm, very lovingly ; as were also *Juliet* and *Desdemona*. *Mrs. Ford*, *Mrs. Page*, *Mrs. Fenton*, late *Anne Page*, and numerous other gossips, were seated round a tea-table, and inhaling and distributing scandal from a beverage, with which they had not the happiness to be acquainted in the world above. *Mrs. Quickly* was attending upon them very busily, though she contrived to bear as large a share in the conversation as the ladies themselves. Such a clatter

and a din, I thought, I had never heard raised before, even by female voices; when suddenly awaking, I found that the noise proceeded from my own sweet-voiced better-half, who told me that my fire had burnt out, my candle was glimmering in it's socket, and that, unless I speedily roused myself, I must go supperless to bed.

“ NEWS OF LITERATURE,” 1826.

THE
DINNER OF THE MONTHS.

ONCE upon a time, the Months determined to dine together. They were a long while deciding who should have the honour of being the Host upon so solemn an occasion; but the lot at length fell upon December, for although this old gentleman's manners were found to be rather *cold* upon first acquaintance, yet it was well known that when once you got under his roof, there was not a merrier, or more hospitable, person in existence. The messenger too, Christmas Day, whom he sent round with his cards of invitation, won the hearts of all; although he played several mad pranks, and received many a *box* in return. February begged to be excused coming to the Dinner, as she was in very bad spirits on account of the loss of her youngest child, the twenty-ninth, who had lately left her, and was not expected to return for four

years. Her objection, however, was over-ruled; and being seated at table between the smiling May, and that merry old fellow October, she appeared to enjoy the evening's entertainment as much as any of the Company.

The Dinner was a superb one; all the company having contributed to furnish out the table. January thought for the *thirtieth* time what he should give, and then determined to send a calf's head. February not being a very productive Month, was also a littled puzzled, but at length resolved to contribute an enormous cake, which she managed to manufacture in fine style, with the assistance of her servant Valentine, who was an excellent fellow at that sort of ware, but especially at Bride-cake. March and April agreed to furnish all the fish; May to decorate the dishes with flowers; June to supply plenty of excellent cyder; July and August to provide the dessert; September a magnificent course of all sorts of game, excepting pheasants; which exception was supplied by October, as well as a couple of hampers of fine home-brewed ale; and November engaged that there should be an abundance of ice. The rest of the eatables, and all the wine, were provided by the worthy host himself.

Just before sitting down to table, a slight

squabble arose about precedency; some of the Company insisting that the first in rank was January, and some that it was March. The host, however decided in favour of January, whom he placed in the seat of honour, at his right hand. November, a prim, blue-nosed old maid, sat at his left; and June, a pleasant, good-tempered fellow, although occasionally rather too *warm*, sat opposite him at the end of the Table.

The Dinner was admirably served. Christmas-day was the principal waiter; but the host had been obliged to borrow the attendance of some of his guests' servants, and accordingly Twelfth-night, Shrove-Tuesday, and Michaelmas-day, officiated in various departments: though Shrove-Tuesday was speedily turned out, for making rather too free with a prim, demure servant-maid, called Good-Friday, while she was toasting some hot-cross buns for the tea-table.

A short, squab, little fellow, called St. Thomas's day, stood behind December's chair, and officiated as toast-master; and much merriment was excited by the contrast between the diminutive appearance of this man, and the longest day, who stood behind June, at the other end of the table. Master Thomas, however, was a very useful fellow; and besides performing the high official duty, which we

have mentioned, he drew the curtains, stirred the fire, lighted and snuffed the candles, and, like all other little men, seemed to think himself of more importance than any body else.

The pretty blushing May was the general toast of the company; and many compliments were passed upon the elegant manner in which she had decorated the dishes. Old January tried to be very sweet upon her, but she received him coldly; as he was known not to be a loyal subject, and to have once stolen a Crown and Sceptre, and hidden them in a grave; and May, who was loyal to the back-bone, had much trouble in finding out, and *restoring* them. January at length ceased to persecute her with his attentions, and transferred them to November, who was of the same politics as himself, although she had not been quite so successful in supporting them. Poor May had scarcely got rid of her venerable lover, before that sentimental swain April, began to tell her that he was absolutely dying for her. This youth was one moment all sunshine, and smiles, and rapture; and the next he dissolved in tears, clouds gathered upon his brow, and he looked a fitter suitor for November than for May; who having at last hinted as much to him, he left her in a huff, and entered into close conversation with September, who al-

though much his senior, resembled him in many particulars.

July, who was of a desperately *hot* temper, was every now and then a good deal irritated by March, a *dry* old fellow, as *cool* as a cucumber, who was continually passing his jokes upon him. At one time July went so far as to threaten him with a prosecution for something he had said ; but March, knowing what he was about, always managed to keep on the *windy* side of the Law, and to throw *dust* in the eyes of his accusers. July, however, contrived to have his revenge ; for, being called upon for a Song, he gave “ *The dashing White Serjeant* ” in great style, and laid a peculiar emphasis upon the words “ March ! March ! *away !* ” at the same time motioning to his antagonist to leave the room.

April having announced that it was raining hard, January was much perplexed as to how he should get home, as he had not brought his carriage. At one time, when he was looking very anxiously out of the window to discover if there were any stars visible, October, at the suggestion of May, asked him if he thought of borrowing *Charles's wain* to carry him, as he had done so great a kindness to it's proprietor ? This put the old fellow into such a passion, that he hastily seized his head-gear, a

red cap, sallied out through the rain, and would most likely have broken his neck in the dark, had not February sent her footman, Candlemas-day, after him with a lanthorn, by whom he was guided in safety to his lodgings in Fog-alley.

On the retirement of the Ladies,—February, May, August, and November,—the Host proposed their healths, which were drank with the usual honours; when April, being a soft-spoken youth, and ambitious of distinction as an orator, began to return thanks for them in a very flowery speech; but was soon coughed down by December and March; and March, by the bye, at length got into such high favour with his old enemy July, that the latter was heard to give him an Invitation, saying, that if ever he came to his side of the Zodiac, he should be most happy to see him. October told the Host that, with his leave, he would drink no more wine, but that he should be glad of some good home-brewed, and a pipe. To this December acceded, and said he should be happy to join him, and he thought his friend March would do the same. March having nodded assent, they set to, and a pretty *puffing* and *blowing* they made among them. April, however, continued to drink Madeira; while June, July, and September, stuck, with exemplary constancy, to the Burgundy.

After repeated summonses to the drawing-room, they joined the Ladies at the tea-table. November drew herself up, and affected to be quite overpowered by the smell of smoke, which March, October, and December had brought in with them; although it was well known that the old lady herself could *blow a cloud* as well as any of them. October seated himself by May, and said he hoped that his pipe would not have the same effect upon her, as upon her Aunt; and after having very gracefully assured him, that she was not at all annoyed by it, he told her, that he would make her exercise her own sweet pipe before the evening was much older; which, instead of annoying, would delight every body. August, a grave stately matron of extraordinary beauty, although perhaps *un peu passé*, officiated as tea-maker. Good-Friday, who by this time had recovered the fright into which Shrove-Tuesday had thrown her, handed about the toasted buns, and Swithin, a servant of July, was employed to keep the tea-pot supplied with water, which he too often did to overflowing.

Tea being over, the old folks went to cards; and the young ones, including October, who managed to hide his years very successfully, to the Piano-forte. May was the *Prima Donna*, and delighted every one, especially poor April, who

was alternately all smiles and tears, during the whole of her performance. October gave them a hunting Song, which caused even the card-tables to be deserted ; and August sang a sweet melancholy Canzonet which was rapturously encored. April both sang and played most unmercifully ; but the company had an ugly trick of yawning over his comic songs, and were ready to expire with laughter at his pathetics.

At length, Candlemas-day having returned from seeing old January home, his mistress February took leave of the company. April, who was a little the worse for the wine he had drunk, insisted on escorting November ; although she had several servants in waiting, and her road was in an opposite direction to his own. May went away in her own carriage, and undertook to set Juned own, who lived very near her. The road was hilly and steep, but her coachman, Ascension-day, got the horses very well to the top ; and July and August both walked home, each preceded by a dog-day, with a lighted torch. September and October, who were next door neighbours, went away in the same hackney-coach ; and March departed as he came, on the back of a rough Shetland poney.

“ NEWS OF LITERATURE,” 1826.

EVERY DAY AT BREAKFAST.

THE Seven Days of the Week, hearing that the Months had dined together, were not a little vexed and puzzled at the circumstance, being anxious to do something of the same sort, and yet feeling that they were by no means in a condition to manage the affair so splendidly as their rivals. Every one knows that a Month is a person whose importance is, at least, eight and twenty times superior to that of a Day, and, therefore, for the latter to attempt to emulate the former, would have been only a practical illustration of the fable of the Ox and the Frog. Still, as the Days very significantly asked, "What would the Months be without them?" It was, therefore, unanimously resolved, that they should have some meal or other together, to shew their spirit; and, as a Dinner was out of the question, it was at length determined that they should have a Breakfast instead, and that Monday, the

first *lay* day—not lady,—of the week, should have the honour of being their entertainer.

Before entering upon a detail of what passed at Breakfast, I may as well introduce my *dramatis personæ* to my Readers. Monday, the Host, had the reputation, among many persons, of being a *luna-tic*, an idea to which his name gave some sort of countenance. He was, however, as far as I could learn, a jovial, good-tempered fellow, whom every body liked, although a little wild and eccentric. He was too fond of encouraging the lower orders to lie in bed in the morning, and to spend the rest of the day in idleness and drunkenness; and was consequently much revered by that class of people, who went so far as to canonize him under the title of *Saint Monday*. He was, at the same time, not without his enemies; for, frequently having occasion to escort some young urchins to School at the expiration of the vacations, they fixed upon him the nickname of *Black Monday*.

Tuesday bore a great resemblance to her next door neighbour; but she was, on the whole, a much steadier person. She was, nevertheless, a great frequenter of festivals; and at Easter, Whitsuntide, and Shrovetide, there was no one better known than she: especially as she was also particularly cele-

brated for her skill in the manufacture of pancakes.

Wednesday was an Irish Catholic Priest; very zealous and very scrupulous, but withal a merry, good humoured person. He was particularly anxious about the observation of fast days. Fasting, he said, being a peremptory injunction of the Church; though he would add, in an under tone, it should never be done on an empty stomach.

Thursday had no distinguishing features of character; he was a "fellow of no mark or likelihood:" one of those harmless, innocent, insipid persons who are met with at every table, whether it be at Breakfast, Dinner, or Supper. Sometimes, when he was drunk, he would take it into his head to boast of his descent from the Saxon divinity, Thor, a piece of Pagan exultation, which excited great horror in all companies.

Friday was a prim old Lady, of the same religious persuasion with Wednesday. She was, however, most celebrated for being a very unlucky person; as she never sat down to table without crossing her knife and fork, spilling the salt, or being the occasion of some other inauspicious omen.

Saturday was a Jewish Rabbi of great learning, zeal, and, in his own way, Piety. He, however,

carried his liberality so far as to have no objection to take a Breakfast or Dinner with a Christian : provided that the said Breakfast or Dinner was *gratis*, and was a good one.

Sunday was a Clergyman of the Church of England ; and most particularly orthodox, especially in his preference of Port wine to that frenchified, papistical, beverage, Claret. He hated the Roman Catholics, principally on account of their advocacy of fasting. The Romish Church has very reasonably complained that it's tenets are not understood by Protestants, and, had the worthy divine been a little more in the secret, I suspect that he would not have found their fasts quite such self-denying ordinances as he imagined. He moreover heartily despised the Jews for their Creed generally, but particularly because they disliked roasted pig, even though it should be a tithe-pig. He was, nevertheless, a person of great learning, talent, and benevolence ; and took much pains to instruct and edify the lower classes. Since the days of Cromwell, however, he had become a little puritanical. He would sometimes take offence at being designated by his right name, and insist upon being called the Sabbath : a title, the possession of which, Saturday would always dispute with him, and, in the opinion

of many, both Jews and Christians, the latter had most reason on his side.

They were in no want of attendants, for they had all the four-and-twenty hours at their beck and call. They contented themselves, however, with the services of four, namely, Morning, Noon, Evening, and Midnight. The first was a rosy-faced boy, very handy and clever, who waited at table. Noon was the cook; and she laboured hard in her vocation, as her burning cheeks and greasy forehead demonstrated. Evening, a pretty black-eyed brunette, received the dishes at the door; and Midnight, a strong, broad-backed negro, officiated at the side-board in the character of butler.

Before sitting down to breakfast, Sunday was called upon to say grace, which he did rather lengthily. During the time which he thus occupied, the Catholics told their beads; the Jew put his tongue into his left cheek; Monday yawned; Tuesday's mouth watered; and Thursday stared at the reverend orator with eyes and mouth wide open, and features, which indicated at the same time wonder and impatience, expressing, as well as dumb looks could, the same sentiments as *Christopher Sly* when at the Theatre, "'Tis a most excellent piece of work!—would 'twere done!"

The *Dejeûné* was, of course, *à la fourchette*. So distinguished a company could not be expected to sit down to a dreary cockney Breakfast, composed of a cup of sugared slop, and a bit of grilled bread, smeared over with butter. The fish, according to the French fashion, was not the first, but the third course ; an arrangement which Wednesday highly approved of, because, he said, it gave him an opportunity of satisfying both his appetite and his conscience ; as he could breakfast upon flesh and fowl first, and fast upon the fish afterwards ; whereas, a fast once commenced, no Christian ought to break it until the appointed period.

Friday, who, at the request of the host, occupied the head of the table, did nothing but commit blunders, both in her feeding and her carving. She ate the bread of her neighbour on her right hand, drank the wine of him on her left, and loaded the Jew's plate with huge slices of ham, the quality of which the latter contrived not to find out until after he had swallowed them.

The Divine, having somewhat blunted his appetite, began to think about the Protestant faith, and commenced a furious attack upon the Priest, for the worship of images. The latter having at last convinced him that the Papists entertained no such tenet, Master Sunday shifted his ground, and

said that if they were not guilty of that species of idolatry, no one could deny that they worshipped the golden calf: a jest at which he himself laughed heartily. Wednesday answered it by taking a pinch of snuff, and saying, that he had heard as much imputed to the Clergy of the Reformed Church; that it was at least certain that they worshipped the fatted calf of good flesh and blood; and that they not merely coveted, but got possession of their neighbour's goods, as they cared more about the tenth calf than the tenth Commandment. This dispute threatening to grow rather warm, the host, to put an end to it, called upon Wednesday for a Toast: not a very common thing, perhaps, to do at Breakfast; but this, you will remember, gentle Reader, was rather an uncommon Breakfast party. Wednesday, like a good Catholic, immediately gave—"the memory of the Saints;" upon which Monday rose up and said, that, as he was the only Saint present, he begged leave to return thanks for the honour just conferred. Friday looked very grave, and seemed shocked at the impiety of the host; but Wednesday only laughed, and said they would dispense with Monday's speech, if he would favour them with a Song. This proposal being unanimously supported, Monday, after the usual apologetic preliminaries, such

as “ bad cold,—can’t remember,—well,—ahem !”
—began as follows :—

“ Talk of days that are gone ! why they’re all left behind,
From Monday and Tuesday to Sunday ;
Talk of losing a day ! why I never could find
A man clever enough to lose one day.

Once a Pleiad was lost, ’twas an awkward affair,
But ’twas felt less in Earth than in Heaven ;
If all seven were lost, man would feel little care,
To whom seven happy days are still given.

Come, fill me a bumper of Claret or Port :
One is brightest, the other is strongest ;
May the days of our happiness never be short,
And the day we love best be the longest !”

By this time, Thursday was particularly drunk, and, feeling that he had had a sufficient portion of wine, began to want punch, a wish which Wednesday observed was natural enough in Judy (*Jeudi*), as the French called him. Coffee being handed about, he contented himself with that beverage, and the *eau-de-vie* which accompanied it. Being very anxious to exhibit his vocal powers, he at last managed to get the ear of the Company, and bawled, or rather hiccuped out, the following Stanzas :—

“ Come, fill up the Tankard, the wisest man drank hard,
And said, that, when sunken in care,
The best cure, he should think, would be found in good drink,
For where can cures lurk, if not there ?

Trowl, trowl, the bonny brown bowl !
Let the dotard and fool from it flee ;
Ye Sages, wear ivy ; and, fond fellows, wive ye ;
But the bonny brown bowl for me !

Let old Time beware, for if he should dare
To intrude 'mongst companions so blithe,
We'll lather his chin with the juice of the bin,
And shave off his beard with his scythe.”

This, however, was all of his Song that poor Thursday could remember ; and soon afterwards he fell back in his chair, and was carried out of the room on the shoulders of the black butler.

The Ladies, Tuesday and Friday, now looked at their watches ; and although they knew perfectly well what the time was before they looked, they affected to be vastly surprised when they discovered that it was near two o'clock. They, therefore, took their leave ; Friday looked very significantly at Wednesday, as much as to request him to escort her home, a mode of asking which he did not choose to understand ; but he gave her his blessing.

Sunday now began to express very liberal sen-

timents as the wine warmed within him. He said that we were indebted to the Catholics for Magna Charta, and the foundation of those magnificent seats of Learning and Piety which we now possessed; and he talked to Saturday about "God's ancient people, the Jews." Monday, who was nothing of a divine, was, nevertheless, happy to see so much harmony among his guests, and assented to every thing that was said, whether by Papist, Protestant, or Israelite. Sunday, however, at length bethought himself of his cloth, and of the time, and having mumbled a thanksgiving grace, which was neither so long, nor so well articulated, as that before Breakfast, the party broke up, and each man took his departure, not remarkably well qualified for the duties of the day.

"NEWS OF LITERATURE," 1826.

A YOUNG FAMILY.

YOU must know, most dear and courteous Reader, that I am a Bachelor : not an old one, Heaven forbid ! but one of whom the Ladies say, “ What a pity it is that Mr. Wiggins does not marry ! ” The fact is, I am sole lord of my hours, and of my limbs. If I stay out late, I need neither lie, nor look sulky, when I get home. I need not say, “ My dear Peggy, I really was the first to come away ; ” nor run the fearful alternative of either losing good company, or enduring a curtain-lecture. Besides all this, I am not surrounded by a sweet young family : but of that “ anon, anon, Sir.”

Having thus introduced myself to your notice, allow me to perform the same kind office for one of my friends. George Cheviot and I were school-fellows. He was neither very wise, nor very rich ; but he was merry, and good-tempered :

qualities which I could then better appreciate than the others, and which I am still heretical enough to think the most valuable of the quartette. He was, moreover, "a tall fellow of his hands," and as brave as a lion; and I, I don't blush to own it, was a weak, puny chitling, and, as it is called in school-phraseology, wanted somebody to take my part. George, accordingly, fought my battles, while I wrote his exercises; and thus we became sworn associates. We played, and romped, and rioted together; and, like the Vicar of Wakefield's parties, what we wanted in wit we made up in laughter; which, after all, I still consider the better thing of the two.

After leaving School, we both settled in the great city, until George, who had a touch of the sentimental in his character, fell in love with, and married, a journey-woman Milliner; the consequence of which was that all his friends cut him, and none of his family would go within a mile of his residence. For my own part, I make it a rule to cut all my friends as soon as they get married: I do not like the transformation of a merry, frank, sociable companion, into an important family man. Neither do I like their invariable practice of laying every fault upon the shoulders of their bachelor acquaintances; for I have known

more than one man, who, when rated by his amiable help-mate for his late hours, has excused himself by saying, "My dear, Mr. Wiggins would not let me come away." Notwithstanding the tenacity with which I usually adhere to this rule, I determined to make an exception in favour of poor George. His grandfather had been a butcher, and his father a master carpenter, and therefore it is not surprising that his mother should be shocked at his demeaning himself so vastly. I, however, who have always been of opinion that, in a free country like ours, a man has a right to make a fool of himself, if he chooses, looked at the affair with different eyes, and we continued as warm and friendly as ever. Although I did not call at his house, we met at our usual places of resort; and I found less difference in George than in most of my married acquaintances. He was, nevertheless, constantly expatiating on the joys of a married life, and especially of seeing a young family growing up about you; of "teaching the young idea how to shoot;" and of watching the archness, the vivacity, and the simplicity, of the pretty prattlers. One day when he was particularly eloquent on these topics, and I was as acquiescent and insincere as a man ought to be on such occasions, he extorted from me a promise to dine with him, that I

might have the satisfaction of seeing him surrounded with his young family.

The appointed day arrived, and I was ushered into the presence of my friend, and his lady. She was dressed very finely, had a mincing air of gentility, and I should have thought her rather pretty, if no one had said any thing about her. In one corner of the room stood a cradle, and close by it—no matter what; socks, and caps, and ribands, were thrown about the room in “most admired disorder;” the chimney smoked; several panes of the window were broken; and three or four squalid, dirty-faced children were sprawling on the ground, and roaring very lustily. “That is a sweet little fellow, Madam,” said I;—Heaven forgive me for the lie!—pointing to a blear-eyed, bloated-cheeked cupid in her arms.

“It’s a girl, Sir,” said she, bursting into a horse laugh; “yes!” she added, patting the bloated cheek aforesaid, “and it is a girl, though he thought it was a boy, my pretty!”

This was the commencement of my bacalarean blunders, and the Lady for some time regarded me with a contempt, which, had I mistaken her own sex, could hardly have been surpassed.

To recover myself from my confusion I took a pinch of snuff; my friend and his wife begged to

participate in the contents of my box, which they had no sooner done, than every obstreperous urchin in the room roared out to be allowed to do the same. This petition was followed by a half-angry altercation between husband and wife, the former saying, "Oh let them, pretty dears!" and the latter, "Indeed they shall not." The cause of indulgence, however, triumphed; and every dirty pug-nose in the room, was speedily made dirtier, at the expense of my black rappee. The consequences may easily be guessed: a round of sneezing, snivelling, coughing, crying, and scolding, commenced, until the adventure was closed by a general wiping of eyes, and blowing of noses, throughout the apartment. For myself, I did nothing but commit blunders all the while I was in the house. Now my foot was on the nose of one, and now my elbow was in the eye of another; and I could not stir an inch without being in danger of dislocating a boy's neck, or fracturing a girl's cranium. I am afraid that I shall be thought a sad barbarian, for not being rapturously fond of children: but give me a cat, say I; I can play with that as long as I please, and kick it out of the room when I'm tired of it.

The announcement that Dinner was ready relieved me, at least for a time, from my many mise-

ries. While descending the stairs, George whispered in my ear, asking me, if I did not think him the happiest fellow in the world, to which I replied, "My dear boy, I quite envy you." We sat down to table, and after many apologies from the Lady, who hoped that I should find something to my liking, but who feared that her fare would be found but homely, as her time was so much occupied by her young family, the dishes were uncovered. Whatever the dinner might be in fact, I found that it was intended to be considered a very good, and even a handsome one. The Lady, who, before her marriage, had lived at the west end of the town, where she made shifts,—in more senses than one,—petticoats, and mantuas, in a garret, wished to pass for a person of some taste and fashion. Accordingly, the table, instead of the ordinary viands which the Englishman delighteth to masticate, exhibited a profusion of would-be French and Italian dishes. Of these I merely counterfeited to eat, excepting one or two; among which was a fricassee, for so my hostess styled a blue-looking leg of a fowl, floating in a sea of dirty lard and salt butter, and a plate of macaroni, so called, which tasted exceedingly like melted tallow. The best thing which I could get

hold of, was a bottle of their Champagne, which was really very tolerable Perry. Our dinner did not, however, pass over without the usual accompaniment of much uproariousness from the room above, which the sweet young family continued to occupy, and Betty was every five minutes despatched from the dining-room to still "the dreadful pother o'er our heads."

Lord Byron says,—

"—— a fine family 's a fine thing,
Provided they don't come in after dinner,"

and I agree with him ; especially in the proviso. At my friend George's, however, the young family was introduced with the dessert. The eldest, a wide-mouthed, round-shouldered girl, took possession of the better half of my chair ; where she amused herself the greater part of the evening by picking cherries out of my plate, and spitting the stones into it. The sweet innocent whose sex I had aspersed, filled, and well filled, the arms of Mamma ; and two greedy, greasy boys stood one on each side of my worthy host. These contrived to entertain themselves in a variety of ways : putting their fingers into the preserves ; drinking out of their father's wine glass ; eating till their sto-

machs were crammed to satiety, and bellowing out bravely for more. As a variety, we were occasionally treated with crying, scolding, and threats of a whipping, which operation I at one time positively expected to see performed in my presence. At length the Lady and the "family" retired, and amidst boasting of his happiness on George's part, and felicitations on mine, we continued to ply the bottle. Rather to my surprise, I found that the Port-wine was admirable, but poor George, as I afterwards learned, had sent for two or three bottles from a neighbouring Tavern, for which he had paid an admirable price. After emptying the decanters on the table, I found that I had had enough, and proposed joining the interesting domestic group up stairs. In consequence, however, of my friend being very pressing, and of my being "nothing loath," I consented that another bottle should be broached. The order to that effect being speedily communicated to Betty, she met it with the astounding reply, "There is no more, Sir." Although I told my friend that I was glad of it, and that I had drank quite sufficient, his chagrin was manifest. He assured me that although his wine-cellar was exhausted, he had plenty of spirits and cigars, of which he proposed that we should

immediately avail ourselves. To this, however, I positively objected, especially as I knew that the *ci-devant* journey-woman Milliner, considered smoking ungenteel.

I have but little more to tell you ; we adjourned to the tea-table, where nothing passed worth recording. The family was again introduced, for the purpose of kissing all round, previous to their retirement to bed. “ Kiss the gentleman, Amy,” said the Lady ; “ and Betty, wipe her face first : how can you take her to the gentleman in such a state ? ” Betty having performed this very requisite operation, I underwent the required penance from one and all, with the heroism of a martyr. Shortly afterwards I took leave of my worthy host and hostess, and experienced a heart-felt delight when I heard the door close behind me. I am not in the habit, like Sterne, of falling down on my knees in the streets, or clasping my hands with delight, in a crowded highway. Still I could not help feeling, that few as were my positive causes of rejoicing, I was not devoid of some negative ones ; and, above all, I felicitated myself, that I was *not* the happiest fellow in the world ; that I had *not* married a journey-woman Milliner ; and that I was *not* blessed with a sweet

young family: as my recent experience of the latter comfort had induced me to think that King Herod was really not quite so cruel as I had hitherto considered him.

“NEWS OF LITERATURE,” 1826.

THE COMET.

A FEW years ago at the little fishing town, or rather village, of G., on the coast of Cornwall, resided a gentleman, who, from his appearance, might be estimated to be nearly sixty years of age; though I have since learned that he was not more than forty. Whatever his age might be, he was more than suspected to be *the* old gentleman; that is to say, no other than the Devil himself. Now I, who happened to be obliged, for the arrangement of some family affairs, to reside a month or two at G., had the misfortune to differ from my worthy neighbours as to the identity of the occupant of the old Manor-house, with the enemy of mankind. In the first place, his dress bore no sort of resemblance to that of Beelzebub. The last person who had the good fortune to get a glimpse of the real Devil was the late Professor Porson, and he has taken the pains to describe his

apparel very minutely, so that I am enabled to speak with some degree of confidence upon this part of the subject. The Professor's description runs thus :—

“ And pray how was the Devil drest ?
 Oh! he was in his Sunday's best :
 His coat was black, and his breeches were blue,
 With a hole behind that his tail went through.

And over the hill, and over the dale,
 And he rambled over the plain ;
 And backwards and forwards he switch'd his long tail,
 As a gentleman switches his cane.”

The “ *complement externe*” of the old gentleman at G. was quite the reverse of all these. In the first place, he had no Sunday's best : the Sabbath and the working day saw him in precisely the same habiliments, a circumstance which confirmed the towns-people in their opinion ; whereas I have no less an authority than that of Porson for deducing an opposite conclusion from the same premises ; because the Devil is scrupulously particular about his Sunday's apparel. Then again he was never seen in a coat, but always wore a loose morning gown. This, however, was a circumstance which, in the opinion of all, told decidedly against

him; for why should he always wear that gown, unless it was for the purpose of hiding his tail beneath it's ample folds? The goodwives of the town were especially pertinacious upon this point, and used to eye the lower part of the old gentleman's garment very suspiciously as he took his morning's walk upon the beach. As to his rambling over hill and dale, in the manner mentioned by the learned Professor, that was quite out of the question; for he was a great sufferer by the gout, and wore bandages as large as a blanket round his leg. Whenever this fact was mentioned, the gossips used to smile, shake their heads, and look particularly wise: observing, that it was clearly a stratagem which he resorted to for the purpose of concealing his cloven foot.

Another circumstance ought not to be omitted: he never went to the Parish Church, the only place of worship within twenty miles; and after he left G. an ivory Crucifix was found in his house, over which there was no doubt, in the opinion of the neighbours, that he used to say the Lord's Prayer backwards, and repeat a variety of diabolical incantations. I ventured humbly to suggest that his absence from Church, and the discovery of the Crucifix, were proofs, not that he was the Devil, but a Catholic; upon which I was inter-

rupted with a sneer, and an exclamation of—
“Where is the mighty difference?”

He gave great offence at the house of a Fisherman who lived near him, and strongly confirmed the prejudices existing against him, by tearing down a horse-shoe which was nailed at the door as a protection against witchcraft, and calling the inhabitants fools and idiots for their pains. Seeing, however, the consternation which he had created, he laughed heartily, and threw them a guinea to make amends. The good folks were determined not to derive any pecuniary advantages from the Devil's gold, but gave it to their last-born, an infant in arms, as a plaything. The child was delighted with the glittering bauble; but having one day got it down it's throat, there it stuck, and instant suffocation ensued. The weeping and wailing of the family on this occasion were mingled with execrations on the author of the calamity, for such they did not hesitate to term the old gentleman, who had evidently thrown to them this infernal coin for the purpose of depriving them of their chief earthly comfort. They were not long in proceeding to the nearest Magistrate, and begging him to issue his warrant to apprehend the Stranger for murder. To this, however, his worship demurred; and the good folks then changed their

battery, and begged to ask, as the guinea was, of course, a counterfeit, whether they could not hang the Devil for coining? To this his worship replied, that though coining is an offence amounting to high-treason, yet the Devil, not being a natural born subject of his Majesty, owed him no allegiance, and therefore could not be guilty of the crime in question. The poor people departed, thinking it all very odd, and that the Devil and the 'Squire must be in collusion; in which opinion they were confirmed by a tallow-chandler, who was the chief tradesman of the town, as well as a violent Radical, and who advised them to petition the House of Commons without delay.

I will explain to my readers the secret of the tallow-chandler's enmity. The old gentleman had of a sudden ceased to buy candles; and had illuminated his house, inside and out, in a strange and mysterious manner, by some means, which, from the brimstone-like smell occasionally perceived, were plainly of infernal origin. For several weeks previously, he had been employing labourers from a distant town,—for he did not engage the honest man, whose pick-axe was the only one ever used by the good people of G.,—in digging trenches, and laying down pipes, round his house. The townsfolk gazed on in wonder and terror, but at a careful

distance; and, although they had a longing desire to understand the meaning of all this, cautiously avoided any intercourse with the only persons who could give them the least information, the labourers who performed the work. At length, one night, without any obvious cause, the lamp before the old gentleman's door, that in his hall, and another in his sitting-room, were seen to spring into light as if by magic. They were also observed to go out in the same way; and thereupon a smell, which could not be of this world, proceeded from them. One day, too, a dreadful explosion took place at the house, and a part of the garden wall was thrown down; all which were plain proofs that it could be no one but the Devil who inhabited there. The good folks of G. had never heard of Gas, or its properties, and I was thought to be no better than I should be, for endeavouring to explain all these phenomena by natural causes.

There was one more fact which proved, if proof were wanting, the accusation of the towns-people. He was a great correspondent, and put more letters into the Post-office than all the rest of the inhabitants of G. together. These were generally directed to Berlin, a town which, after much enquiry, was ascertained to lie in a remote part of Devonshire, and to be inhabited by a horridly dis-

solute and profane set of people. What was stranger still, no part of the superscription could ever be read but the word Berlin: the rest was such a piece of cramp penmanship, that the most expert scholar in G. could not decipher it. The Postmaster, without having ever heard of *Tony Lumpkin*, or his aphorisms, knew that “the inside of a letter is the cream of the correspondence,” and ventured one day to open an epistle which the mysterious one had just dropped into his box. The contents, however, did not much edify him. Not a letter was there which resembled any one in the English alphabet; it was, therefore, some devilish and cabalistic writing, invented for purposes of evil. My opinion being asked, I positively refused to look at the inside; but having perused the superscription, I said that it was addressed to some one in Berlin, which was a city in Germany; and that, although I did not understand German, I had no doubt that the direction was written in the German character. Being asked whether even I, with all my scholarship, could read it? I candidly confessed that I could not; upon which I was asked, with a sneer, whether I expected to persuade them that the Germans were such a nation of fools as to write in a hand which nobody could read? The good folks were also firmly persuaded

that, whatever I might say, I was in my conscience of the same opinion with them, and my refusal to look at the inside of the letter was set down as a plain proof that I was afraid of receiving some mysterious injury if I did.

My own opinions were so much opposed to those of my neighbours, that I felt rather a desire to be acquainted with the Stranger, whose manners appeared to be open and good-humoured, although testy and eccentric. My naturally shy disposition prevented me, however, from accomplishing my wish ; and, besides this, I found that my own affairs were enough to occupy me during the short time that I remained at G. I learned that the person who had created so much consternation had arrived at that town about four months before, and that the house had been previously engaged for him. Who, or what he was, or why he came thither, no one who tried could ascertain. Whether I could have attained this wonderful height in knowledge, I do not know ; for, having something else to do, I never made the attempt. At length the old gentleman and his two servants, an elderly female, and a stout active man who talked a gibberish, so they called it at G., which no one could understand, were one day seen very busily employed in packing up. A queer-looking, broad-

bottomed vessel, from which a boat was lowered, appeared off the town. The three Strangers sallied out with their boxes, and after depositing a packet at the Post-office, addressed to the former proprietor of the house, which was supposed to contain the keys, and was ordered to be kept until the arrival of the person to whom it was addressed, they got into the boat, rowed to the ship, and were never seen, or heard of, more.

During the short time afterwards that I continued at G. I was subject to repeated lectures for my obstinate infidelity as to the old gentleman's diabolisms ; and whatever argument I advanced in support of my own opinion, it was sure to be met by the unanswerable question, " If he was not the Devil, who the Devil was he ? "

Many years rolled over my head, and the memory of the mysterious inhabitant of G. had entirely vanished from it, when circumstances, which it is unnecessary to detail, obliged me to pay a visit to the north of Germany. At the close of a fine autumnal day in 1824, I found myself entering the splendid city of Berlin. Both my good steed and I were so much fatigued that a speedy resting was very desirable for us ; but it was long before I could choose an Hotel out of the immense numbers which presented themselves to my view. Some

were far too magnificent for my humble means, and the mere sight of their splendour appeared to melt away the guilders in my pocket. Some, on the other hand, were such as no "man of wit and fashion about town" would think of putting his head into. At length I thought that I had discovered one which looked like the happy medium, and the whimsicality of it's sign determined me to put up there. The sign was *Der Teufel*; and since my departure from G. I had acquired a sufficient mastery of the German language to know what those two words signified in English. I entered, and, after taking all due precautions for the accommodation and sustenance of the respectable quadruped who had borne me upon his back for nearly half the day, I began to think of satisfying that appetite which disappointment, anxiety, and fatigue, had not been able entirely to destroy. My worthy Host, who did not seem to bear any resemblance to his sign, unless I could have the ingratitude to ascribe his magical celerity and marvellous good fare to the auspices of his patron Saint, quickly covered my table with a profusion of tempting viands; while a flask of sparkling Hochheim towered proudly, like a presiding deity, above the whole. My good humour, however, was a little clouded when I saw plates, knives, and

forks, laid for two instead of one. "What means this?" said I to the Landlord.

"Mein Herr," answered he, submissively, "a gentleman who has just arrived will have the honour of dining with you."

"But I mean to dine alone," I replied angrily; not that I doubted the sufficiency of the meal, but I did not choose to be intruded upon by strangers.

"Pardon me, mein Herr," said the Landlord with unabashed impudence, "I have told Herr von Schwartzmann that Dinner is ready. I am sure you will like his company. He is a gentleman of good fortune and family, and is moreover——"

"I care not who he is," exclaimed I; "but in order to cut thy prating short, and to get my dinner, if I must needs submit, let him come in at once, even if he be the Devil himself!"

I had scarcely uttered these words when I started as if I had really seen the person whom I mentioned, for the room-door opened, and in walked the old gentleman who had caused so much wonder and terror at G. The superstitions of the people of that town, the sign of the Inn where I now was, the old fellow's name, Schwartzmann, which being interpreted in English, meaneth black man, my own petulant exclamation, and the sudden ap-

parition of this unaccountable person, were circumstances that crowded my brain at once, and for an instant I almost fancied myself in the presence of the foul fiend. "You seem surprised," at length said Herr von Schwartzmann, "at our unexpected meeting; and, indeed, you cannot be more so than I am. I believe it was in England that we met before."

"Even so, mein Herr," I answered, encouraged by the earthly tone of his voice, and fancying that the good-humoured smile which mantled over his face must be of this world, and at any rate could be of no worse origin; "even so, mien Herr; and I have often regretted that, placed as we were among a horde of barbarous peasantry, an opportunity never occurred for our better acquaintance."

"It is at length arrived," he said, filling two glasses of Hochheim; "let us drink to our better and our long acquaintance."

I pledged the old gentleman's toast with great alacrity, and it was not until the passage of the wine down my throat had sealed me to it irrevocably, that I reflected upon the sentiment to which I had drank with so much cordiality; and was again shaken with doubts as to the nature of the

person with whom I had avowed my wish to be long and intimately acquainted.

I looked upon his feet, "but that's a fable," and then I looked upon the viands on which he was feeding lustily, whilst I, although he had the courtesy to load my plate with the best of every thing, was wasting the golden moments in idle alarms and superstitious absurdity. The more reasonable man was roused within me, and I fell to the work of mastication with a zeal and fervour that would have done honour to Dr. Kitchener himself.

"Well, my friend," said my companion, after we had pretty well satisfied the cravings of our stomachs, our Landlord has this day treated us nobly, and methinks we have not been backward in doing honour to his excellent cheer. He is an honest fellow, who well deserves to prosper, and we will therefore, if you please, drink *Success to Der Teufel!*"

I had raised my glass to my lips when I found that the old gentleman meant to propose a toast, but I set it down again right hastily, as soon as I heard the very equivocal sentiment to which he wanted me to pledge myself. The fiend, I thought, is weaving his web around me, and wishes me to

drink to my own perdition. A cold sweat came over me; a film covered my eyes; and I thought that I perceived the old man looking askew at me, while his lip was curled with a malignant smile.

“ You are not well,” he said, taking my hand. I shrank from his grasp at first, but to my surprise it was as cool and healthy as the touch of humanity could possibly be. “ Let us retire to our worthy Host’s garden; the heat of this room overpowers you; and we can finish our wine coolly and pleasantly in the arbour.”

He did not wait for my consent, but led me out; and our bottle and glasses were very quickly arranged upon a table in a leafy arbour, where we were sheltered from the sun, and enjoyed the refreshing fragrance of the evening breeze as it gently stirred the leaves about us.

“ They were odd people,” said my friend, “ those inhabitants of G.; they stared at me, and shrank from me, as if I had been the Devil himself.”

“ And in truth, mein Herr,” I replied, “ they took you to be no less a personage than he whom you have just named.”

The old gentleman laughed long and heartily at my information. “ I thought as much,” he said, “ it is an honour which has been ascribed to me from

the hour of my birth, and in more countries than one."

"Indeed," said I, "you speak as if there were something in your history to which a Stranger might listen with interest. May I crave the favour of you to be a little more communicative?"

"With all my heart!" he replied: "but in truth you will not find much to interest you in my story. A little mirth and a good deal of sorrow make up the history of most men's lives, and mine is not an exception to the general rule. I was born some threescore years ago, and was the son and heir of the Baron von Schwartzmann, whose Castle is a few miles to the southward of this city; and I am now, by your leave, mein Herr, the Baron himself." I made him a lower bow than I had ever yet greeted him with. "My Mother had brought into the world, about two years previously, a daughter of such extraordinary beauty, that it was confidently expected that the next child would be similarly endowed; but I was no sooner presented to my Father than he was so startled at my surprising ugliness, that he retreated several paces, and involuntarily exclaimed, 'The Devil!' This was a *Christian name* which stuck to me ever afterwards, and which, as you can bear witness, followed me even into a foreign country.

“ My Godfather and Godmother, however, treated me much more courteously than my own natural parent, and bestowed upon me, at the baptismal font, the high-sounding appellation of Leopold. Nothing worth describing occurred during the years of my infancy. I cried, and laughed, and pouted, and sucked, and was kissed and scolded, and treated, and whipped, as often, and with the same alternations, as children in general; only I grew uglier, and justified the paternal benediction more and more every day. In due time I was sent to a grammar-school. As I had at home been accustomed to independence and the exercise of my self-will, I soon became the most troublesome fellow there; and yet, I may now say it without the imputation of vanity, I contrived, by some means or other, to gain the hearts of all, whether tutors or pupils. For solving a theme, or robbing an orchard; writing nonsense verses, or frightening a whole neighbourhood; translating Homer into German verse, or beating a Watchman until his flesh was one general bruise, who could compete with Leopold von Schwartzmann? One day I was publicly reprimanded and punished for some monstrous outrage, and the next rewarded with all the honours of the School for my proficiency in the Classics. In short, it was

generally agreed that there was not such another clever, pleasant, good-tempered, good-for-nothing fellow in the School. ‘Certainly,’ the wise people would say, ‘*the Devil is in him!*’

“And now,” added the old man, smiling, but smiling, I thought, somewhat solemnly and sadly, “I must let you into the secret of one of my weaknesses. I have ever had the most implicit belief in the science of Astrology. You stare at me incredulously, and I can excuse your incredulity. You, born in England perhaps some forty years ago, can have but few superstitions in common with one whose birth-place is Germany, and whose natal Star first shone upon him above three-score years before the time at which he is speaking. Observe that Comet,” said he, pointing towards the west; “it is a very brilliant one, and this is the last night that it will be visible.”

“It is the beautiful Comet,” I said, “which has shone upon us for the last six months, and which first appeared, I think, in the belt of Orion.”

“True, true,” replied the Baron; “it is the Comet which, according to the calculations of Astronomers, visits the eyes of the inhabitants of this world once in twenty years, and I can confirm the accuracy of their calculations as far as relates to three of its visits. You will smile, and think that

the eccentricity of my conduct and character is sufficiently accounted for, when I tell you that that Comet is my natal planet. On the very day and instant that it became visible, sixty years and six months ago, did I first open my eyes in my Father's castle. There is, however, a tradition connected with this Comet, which has sometimes made me uneasy. It runs thus:—

‘ The Comet that’s born in the belt of Orion,
Whose Cradle it gilds, gilds the place they shall die on.’

However, this is it's third return that I have seen, and being now as hale and hearty as ever I was, the tradition, if it means any thing to interest me, means that I shall live on to the good old age of fourscore. But to return to my history. I was a fervent believer in Astrology; and thought that if I could meet with a person, either male or female, who was born under the same Star, to that person I might safely attach myself, and our destinies must be indissolubly bound together. I had, however, never met with such a person, and as yet I had never seen my natal Star, for on the day on which I entered the University of Halle I wanted three days of attaining my twentieth year. Those three days seemed the longest and most tedious that I had ever passed; but at length the fateful

morning dawned, on the evening of which, a few minutes before the hour of eight, the hour of my birth, I hastened to a secluded place at a short distance from the town, and planting myself there, gazed earnestly and intently upon the belt of Orion. I had not gazed long before a peculiar light seemed to issue from it, and at length I saw a beautiful Comet, with a long and glittering train, rising in all its celestial pomp and majesty. How shall I describe my feelings at that moment? I felt as it were new-born: new ideas, new hopes, new joys, seemed to rush upon me, and I gave vent to my emotions in an exclamation of delight. This exclamation I was astonished to hear repeated as audibly and fervently as it was made, and turning round, I beheld a female within a few paces of me to my right.

“ She was tall, and exquisitely formed: her dress denoted extreme poverty; and her eye, which for a moment had been lighted up with enthusiasm, was downcast, and abashed with a sense of conscious inferiority, when it met mine. Still I thought that I had never beheld a face so perfectly beautiful. Her general complexion was exquisitely fair, without approaching to paleness, with a slight tinge of the rose on each cheek, which I could not help thinking that care and tenderness might be able to

deepen to a much ruddier hue. Her eyes were black and sparkling, but the long dark lashes which fell over them seemed, I thought, acquainted with tears. Her hair was of the same colour with her eyes, and almost of the same brightness. I gazed first upon her and then upon the newly-risen Comet, and my bosom seemed bursting with emotions which I could not express, or even understand.

“ ‘ Sweet girl!’ I said, approaching her, and taking her hand, ‘ what can have induced you to wander abroad at this late hour?’

“ ‘ The Comet!’ said she, ‘ the Comet!’ pointing to it with enthusiasm.

“ ‘ It is indeed a beautiful Star,’ I replied, and as I gazed I felt as if I were the apostle of truth for so saying, ‘ but here,’ I added, pressing my lip to her white forehead, ‘ is one still more beautiful, but alas! more fragile, and which ought therefore not to be exposed to danger.’

“ ‘ Aye,’ she said, ‘ but it is the Star which I have been waiting to gaze upon for many a long year; it is the Star that rules my destiny, my natal Star! Twenty years ago, and at this hour, was I brought into the world.

“ Scarcely could I believe my ears. I thought that the sounds which I had heard could not come from the beautiful lips which I saw moving, but

that some lying fiend had whispered them in my ears; I made her repeat them over and over again. I thought of the desire which had so long haunted me, and which now seemed gratified; I thought, too, of the beautiful lines of Schiller:—

‘ It is a gentle and affectionate thought,
That in immeasurable heights above us,
At our first birth this wreath of love was woven,
With sparkling stars for flowers!’

In short, I thought and felt so much that I fell at the fair girl’s feet; told her the strange coincidence of our destinies; revealed to her my name and rank; and made her an offer of my hand and heart without any further ceremony.

“ ‘ Alas Sir!’ she said, permitting, but not returning the caress which I gave her, ‘ I could indeed fancy that Fate has intended us to be indissolubly united, but I am poor, friendless, wretched; my Mother is old and bed-ridden; and my Father, I fear, follows desperate courses to procure even the slender means on which we subsist.’

“ ‘ But I have wealth, sweet girl!’ exclaimed I, ‘ sufficient to remove all these evils; and here is an earnest of it,’ endeavouring to force my purse into her hands.

“ ‘ Nay, nay,’ she said, thrusting it back, ‘ keep

your gold, lest slander should blacken the fair fame which is Adeline's only dowry !'

" ' Sweet Adeline ! beautiful Adeline !' said I, ' do not let us part thus. Can you doubt my sincerity ? Would you vainly endeavour to interpose a barrier against the decrees of fate ? Believe that I love you, and say that you love me in return.'

" ' It is the will of Fate,' she said, sinking in my arms : ' Why should I belie what it has written in my heart ? Leopold, I love thee.'

" Thus did we, who but half an hour previously were ignorant of each other's existence, plight our mutual vows ; but each recognised a being long sought and looked for, and each yielded to the overruling influence of the Planet which was the common governor of our destiny. I was anxious to celebrate our nuptials immediately, but Adeline put a decided negative upon it.

" ' What,' she said, ' were you born under yon Star, and know not the dark saying which is attached to it ?—

' The love that is born at the Comet's birth,
Treat it not like a thing of earth ;
Breathe it to none but the loved-one's ear,
Lest Fate should remove what Hope deems so near ;
Seal it not till the hour and the day
When that Star from the Heavens shall pass away.'

“ I instantly recollected the saying, and acquiesced in the wisdom of not acting adversely to what I believed to be the will of destiny. ‘ It will then be six long months, sweet Adeline !’ said I, ‘ ere our happiness can be sealed ; but I must see thee daily, I cannot else exist.’

“ ‘ Call upon me at yonder white Cottage,’ she answered, ‘ at about this hour. My Father is then out ; indeed he has been out for some weeks now, but he is never at home at that hour ; and my Mother will have retired to rest. Farewell, Leopold von Schwartzmann.’

“ ‘ Farewell, dearest Adeline ! tell me no more of thy name. I seek not, I wish not, to know it ; tell it not to me until the hour when thou art about to exchange it for Schwartzmann.’

“ Our parting was marked, as the partings of lovers usually are, with sighs, and tears, and embraces, protestations of eternal fidelity, and promises of speedily seeing each other again.

“ The love thus suddenly lighted up within our bosoms, I did not suffer to die away, or to be extinguished. Every evening at the hour of nine, I was at the fair one’s Cottage door, and ever found her ready to receive me ; nay, at length I used to find the latchet left unfastened for me, and I stole up stairs to her chamber unquestioned. I soon

discovered that her mind and manners were, at least, equal to her beauty; but the utmost penury and privation were but too visible around her. It was in vain that I offered her the assistance of my purse, and urged her to accept by anticipation that which must very shortly be hers by right. The high-minded girl positively refused to avail herself of this offer, and then I could not help at all hazards, endeavouring to persuade her to consent to our immediate union, as that seemed to me to be the only means of rescuing her from the distressing state of poverty in which I found her.

“ ‘ Say no more, Leopold,’ she said, one night, when I had been urging this upon her more strenuously than ever, ‘ say no more, lest I should be weak enough to consent, and so draw down upon our heads the bolts of destiny. And, Leopold, I find thy presence dangerous to me; let me, therefore, I pray thee, see thee no more until the hour which is to make us one. I dread thy entreating eyes, thy persuading tongue: one short month of separation, and then a whole life of constant union. Say that it shall be so, for my sake.’ ”

“ ‘ It shall be so, it shall, for thy sake!’ I said. For, bitter as was the trial to which she put me,

the tone and manner in which she implored my acquiescence were irresistible.

“ ‘Then farewell!’ she said, ‘come not near me until that day. Should you attempt to see me earlier, I have a fearful foreboding that something evil will befall us.’

“ This was the most sorrowful parting which I had yet experienced; but I bore it as manfully as I could. Three, four, five days, did I perform my promise, and never ventured near the residence of Adeline. I shut myself up in my own chamber, where I saw no one but the domestic who brought my meals. I could not support this life any longer, and at last I determined to pay a visit to Adeline.

“ ‘Whither would you go, mein Herr?’ said the Centinel at the City gate, through which I had to pass.

“ ‘I have business of importance about a mile from the City,’ I answered; ‘pray do not detain me.’

“ ‘Nay, mein Herr,’ replied the Centinel, ‘I have no authority to detain you; but if you will take the advice of a friend, you will not leave the city to-night. Know you not that the noted bandit Brandt is suspected to be in the neighbourhood

this evening; that the Council have set a price upon his head; and that the City bands are now engaged in pursuit of him?"

" ' Be it so,' I said; ' a man who is skulking about to avoid the City bands is not, methinks, an enemy whom I need greatly fear encountering.'

" The Centinel shook his head, but allowed me to pass without further question. Love lent wings to my feet, and already was Adeline's white Cottage in sight, when a violent blow on the back of my head with the butt-end of a pistol, stretched me on the ground, and a man, whose knee was immediately on my chest, pointed the muzzle at my head.

" ' Deliver your money,' he said, ' or you have not a moment to live.'

" ' Ruffian,' I said, ' let me go; I am a Student at Halle, son of the Baron von Schwartzmann. Thou durst not for thy head attempt my life.'

" ' That we shall soon see,' said the villain coolly; and my days had then certainly been numbered, had not three men, springing from a neighbouring thicket, suddenly seized the robber, disarmed him, and then proceeded very quietly to bind his hands behind him.

" ' Have we caught you at last, mein Herr

Brandt?" said one of my deliverers. ' We have been a long time looking out for you. Now we meet to part only once, and for ever.'

" The Robber eyed them sullenly, but did not deign a reply, as they marched him between them towards the town. We soon entered the gate, through which I had already passed, and were conducted before the Commander of the garrison, who, as Brandt had been placed by proclamation under military law, was the Judge appointed to decide upon his case.

" My evidence was given in a very few words, and, corroborated as it was by that of the policemen, was, I perceived, fatal to Brandt. I could not help, however, entreating for mercy to the wretched criminal.

" ' Nay, Sir,' said the officer, ' your entreaty is vain. Even without this last atrocious case to fix his doom, we needed only evidence to identify him as Brandt, to have cost him all his lives, were they numerous as the hairs upon his head. Away with him, and hang him instantly upon the ram-parts.'

" ' I thank thee, Colonel,' said the Bandit, ' for my death. It is better to die than to witness such sights as have torn my heart daily. It was only to

save a wretched wife and daughter from starvation, that I resorted to this trade. But, fare thee well ! Brandt knows how to die.'

" The unhappy man was instantly removed ; and finding that there was no further occasion for my attendance, I rushed into the streets in a state that bordered upon frenzy. The idea that I had, however innocently, been the occasion of the death of a man, shook every fibre in my frame ; and while I was suffering under the influence of these feelings, the sullen roll of the death-drums announced that Brandt had ceased to live.

" I went home and hurried to bed, but not to rest. The violence of the blow which I had received from the Bandit, as well as the mental agony which I had undergone, threw me into a dangerous fever. For ten days I was in a state of delirium, raving incoherently, and unconscious of every thing around me. At length I arrived at the crisis of my disorder, which proved favourable. The fever left my brain, and the glassy glaze of my eye was exchanged for it's usual look of intelligence and meaning. I turned round my head in my bed, and looked towards the window of my chamber. It was evening ; the arch of heaven was of one deep azure, and the Comet was shining in all

it's brightness. It's situation in the Heavens, which was materially different from that which it occupied when I was last conscious of seeing it, recalled and fixed my wandering recollections of all that was connected with it. I rang the bell violently, and was speedily attended by my valet, who had watched over me during my illness. I interrupted the expressions of delight which the sight of my convalescent state drew from him, by eagerly enquiring what was the day of the month, and the hour.

“ ‘ It is the eighth of August, Sir; and the Cathedral clock has just chimed seven.’ ”

“ ‘ Heavens!’ I exclaimed, starting from my bed, ‘ had this cursed fever detained me one hour longer, the destined moment would have passed away. Assist me to dress, good Ferdinand, I must away instantly.’ ”

“ ‘ Sir,’ said the man, alarmed, ‘ the Doctor would chide.’ ”

“ ‘ Care not for his chiding,’ said I; ‘ I will secure thee; but an affair of life and death is not more urgent than that on which I am about to go.’ ”

“ ‘ The good Curate, von Wilden, is below,’ said Ferdinand, ‘ and told me that he must see you; but I dared not disturb you. He was just going

away when you rang the bell, and is now waiting to know the result.'

" I immediately remembered that I had appointed the Curate to meet me at that hour, for the purpose of proceeding to Adeline's Cottage and tying the nuptial knot between us. I had told him the nature of the duty which I wished him to perform, without, however, disclosing so much as to break through the caution contained in the traditional verses. I lost no time in joining him in the hall, and proceeded to leave the house, accompanied by him, with as much celerity as possible, lest the intervention of my medical attendant, or some other person, should throw difficulty in the way.

" We soon reached the open fields. It was a beautiful star-light evening. The Comet was nearly upon the verge of the horizon, and I was fearful of it's disappearing before the ceremony of my nuptials could be accomplished. We therefore proceeded rapidly on our walk. An involuntary shudder came over me as I passed by the scene of my encounter with the Bandit; but just then the white Cottage peeped out from among the woods which had concealed it, and my heart felt re-assured by the near prospect of unbounded happiness.

We approached the door: it was on the latch, which I gently raised, and then proceeded, as usual, up the stairs, followed by the Curate. I thought I heard a low moaning sound as we approached the chamber-door; but it was ajar, and we entered. An old woman, who seemed scarcely able to crawl about, was at the bed-side with a phial in her hand; and stretched upon the couch, with a face on which the finger of death seemed visibly impressed, lay the wasted form of Adeline. ‘Just Heaven!’ I exclaimed, ‘what new misery is there in store for me?’

“The sound of my voice roused Adeline from her death-like stupor. She raised her eyes, but closed them again suddenly on seeing me, exclaiming, ‘’Tis he, ’tis he!—the fiend!—save me, save me!’ The bitterness of death seemed to invade my heart when I heard this unaccountable exclamation. I gasped for breath, and cold drops of agony rolled from my temples. I ventured to approach the bed. I took her burning hand within my own, and pressed it to my heart. She again fixed her eyes upon me solemnly, and said, ‘Know you whom you embrace? Miserable man, has not the universal rumour reached thine ear?’

“‘Dearest Adeline,’ I said, ‘for the last ten

days I have been stretched upon the bed of delirium and insensibility. Rumour, however trumpet-tongued to other ears, has been dumb to mine.'

" ' You call me Adeline,' she said, ' is that all?'

" ' The hour,' I answered, ' is at length arrived, I thought it would be a less melancholy one, when thou wert to tell me that other name, ere thou exchanged'st it for ever.'

" ' Know then,' said she, rising up in the bed with an unusual effort, in which all her remaining strength seemed to be concentrated, ' that my name is Adeline Brandt!'

" For an instant she fixed her dark eyes upon my face, which grew cold and pallid as her own; then the film of death came over them, and her head sank back upon her pillow, from which it never rose again.

" Weak, and sickly, and stricken, as it were, with a thunderbolt, I know not how I preserved my recollection and reason at that moment. I remember, however, looking from the chamber window, and seeing the Comet shining brightly, although just on the verge of the horizon; I turned to the dead face of Adeline, and thought of those ill-omened lines,—

' The Comet that's born in the belt of Orion,
Whose cradle it gilds, gilds the place they shall die on.'

I looked again, and the Comet was just departing from the heavens ; it's fiery train was no longer visible ; and in an instant after the nucleus disappeared.

“ I have but little to add in explanation. I learned that, on the evening of our meeting, the unfortunate Brandt, who had carried on his exploits at a distance, knowing that a price was set upon his head, had fled to the house where his wife and daughter lived, and between whom and him no suspicion of any connexion existed, resolving, if he escaped his present danger, to give up his perilous courses ; but that he found those two females in such a state of wretchedness and starvation, that he rushed out, and committed the act for which he forfeited his life. Had I but asked Adeline her name, this fatal event would not have happened ; for I should most assuredly have removed her to another dwelling, and provided in some way for her Father's safety ; or, had not the traditional verses restrained us from mentioning our attachment to any one until the hour of our nuptials, I should have revealed it to the Bandit, and so taken away from him every inducement for following his lawless occupation. Ill news is not long in spreading. Adeline heard of her Father's death, and that I was the occasion of it, a few hours after it took place. The same cause which sent her to

her death-bed roused her Mother from the couch of lethargy and inaction on which she had lain for so many years; and I found that she was the wretched old woman whom I had seen attending the last moments of her daughter.

“ The remainder of my history has little in it to interest you. I left the University, and retired to my Father’s castle, where I shut myself up, and lived a very recluse life, until his death, which happened a few years afterwards, obliged me to exert myself in the arrangement of my family affairs. The lapse of years gradually alleviated, although it could not eradicate, my sorrow; but when I found myself approaching my fortieth year, and knew that the Comet would very soon make it’s re-appearance, I could not bear the idea of looking again upon the fatal Planet which had caused me so much uneasiness. I therefore resolved to travel in some country where it would not be visible; and having received a pressing invitation from a friend in England to visit his native land, accompanied by an intimation that his house, at G. was entirely at my service, I did not hesitate to accept his offer. You know something of my adventures there, especially of the consternation which I occasioned by laying down Gas-pipes round my friend’s house, in consequence of a

letter which I had received from him, requesting me to take the trouble to superintend the workmen. Twenty more years have now rolled over my head; the Comet has re-appeared, and I can gaze on it with comparative indifference; and as it is just about taking its leave of us, suppose we walk out and enjoy the brightness of its departing glory."

I acceded to the old Gentleman's proposal, and lent him the assistance of my arm during our walk. "Yonder fence," said he, "surrounds my friend Berger's garden, in which there is an eminence from which we shall get a better view. The gate is a long way round, but I think you, and even I, shall find but little difficulty in leaping this fence; I will indemnify you for the trespass:" and he had scarcely spoken before he was on the other side of it. I followed him, and we proceeded at a brisk pace towards a beautiful shrubbery, on an elevated spot in the centre of the garden. M. von Schwartzmann led the way, but he had scarcely reached the summit before I heard an explosion, and saw him fall upon the ground. I hastened to his assistance, and found him weltering in his blood. I raised him, and supported him in my arms, but he shook his head, saying, "No, no, my friend, it is all in vain! the influence of that

malignant Star has prevailed over me. I forgot that my friend Berger had lately planted spring-guns in his grounds. But it is Destiny, and not they, which has destroyed me. Farewell!—farewell!”

In these words his last breath was spent; his eyes, while they remained open, were fixed upon the Comet, and the instant they closed, the ill-boding planet sunk beneath the horizon.

“FORGET ME NOT.” 1827.

THE MAGICIAN'S VISITER.

IT was at the close of a fine autumnal day, and the shades of evening were beginning to gather over the city of Florence, when a low quick rap was heard at the door of Cornelius Agrippa, and shortly afterwards a Stranger was introduced into the apartment in which the Philosopher was sitting at his studies.

The Stranger, although finely formed, and of courteous demeanour, had a certain indefinable air of mystery about him, which excited awe, if, indeed, it had not a repellent effect. His years it was difficult to guess, for the marks of youth and age were blended in his features in a most extraordinary manner. There was not a furrow in his cheek, nor a wrinkle on his brow, and his large black eye beamed with all the brilliancy and vivacity of youth; but his stately figure was bent, apparently beneath the weight of years; his hair,

although thick and clustering, was grey; and though his voice was feeble and tremulous, yet its tones were of the most ravishing and soul-searching melody. His costume was that of a Florentine gentleman; but he held a staff like that of a Palmer in his hand, and a silken sash, inscribed with oriental characters, was bound around his waist. His face was deadly pale, but every feature of it was singularly beautiful, and its expression was that of profound wisdom, mingled with poignant sorrow.

“Pardon me, learned Sir,” said he, addressing the Philosopher, “but your fame has travelled into all lands, and has reached all ears; and I could not leave the fair City of Florence without seeking an interview with one who is its greatest boast and ornament.”

“You are right welcome, Sir,” returned Agrippa; “but I fear that your trouble and curiosity will be but ill repaid. I am simply one, who, instead of devoting my days, as do the wise, to the acquirement of wealth and honour, have passed long years in painful and unprofitable study; in endeavouring to unravel the secrets of Nature, and initiating myself in the mysteries of the Occult Sciences.”

“Talkest thou of *long* years!” echoed the

Stranger, and a melancholy smile played over his features : “ thou, who hast scarcely seen fourscore since thou left'st thy cradle, and for whom the quiet grave is now waiting, eager to clasp thee in her sheltering arms ! I was among the tombs to-day, the still and solemn tombs : I saw them smiling in the last beams of the setting sun. When I was a boy, I used to wish to be like that sun ; his career was so long, so bright, so glorious ! But to-night I thought ‘ it is better to slumber among those tombs than to be like him.’ To-night he sank behind the hills, apparently to repose, but to-morrow he must renew his course, and run the same dull and unvaried, but toilsome and unquiet, race. There is no grave for him ! and the night and morning dews are the tears that he sheds over his tyrannous destiny.”

Agrippa was a deep observer and admirer of external nature and of all her phenomena, and had often gazed upon the scene which the Stranger described, but the feelings and ideas which it awakened in the mind of the latter were so different from any thing which he had himself experienced, that he could not help, for a season, gazing upon him in speechless wonder. His guest, however, speedily resumed the discourse.

“ But I trouble you, I trouble you ; then to

my purpose in making you this visit. I have heard strange tales of a wondrous Mirror, which your potent art has enabled you to construct, in which whosoever looks may see the distant, or the dead, on whom he is desirous again to fix his gaze. My eyes see nothing in this outward visible world which can be pleasing to their sight: the grave has closed over all I loved; and Time has carried down it's stream every thing that once contributed to my enjoyment. The world is a vale of tears: but amongst all the tears which water that sad valley, not one is shed for me! the fountain in my own heart, too, is dried up. I would once again look upon the face which I loved; I would see that eye more bright, and that step more stately, than the antelope's; that brow, the broad smooth page on which God had inscribed his fairest characters. I would gaze on all I loved, and all I lost. Such a gaze would be dearer to my heart than all that the world has to offer me; except the grave! except the grave! except the grave!"

The passionate pleading of the Stranger had such an effect upon Agrippa, who was not used to exhibit his miracle of art to the eyes of all who desired to look in it, although he was often tempted by exorbitant presents and high honours to do so,

that he readily consented to grant the request of his extraordinary visiter.

“ Whom would'st thou see ? ” he enquired.

“ My child ! my own sweet Miriam ! ” answered the Stranger.

Cornelius immediately caused every ray of the light of Heaven to be excluded from the chamber, placed the Stranger on his right hand, and commenced chaunting, in a low soft tone, and in a strange language, some lyrical verses, to which the Stranger thought he heard occasionally a response ; but it was a sound so faint and indistinct that he hardly knew whether it existed any where but in his own fancy. As Cornelius continued his chaunt, the room gradually became illuminated, but whence the light proceeded it was impossible to discover. At length the Stranger plainly perceived a large Mirror, which covered the whole of the extreme end of the apartment, and over the surface of which a dense haze, or cloud, seemed to be rapidly passing.

“ Died she in wedlock's holy bands ? ” enquired Cornelius.

“ She was a virgin, spotless as the snow.”

“ How many years have passed away since the grave closed over her ? ”

A cloud gathered on the Stranger's brow, and he answered somewhat impatiently, "Many, many! more than I have now time to number."

"Nay," said Agrippa, "but I must know; for every ten years that have elapsed since her death once must I wave this wand; and when I have waved it for the last time you will see her figure in yon Mirror."

"Wave on, then," said the Stranger, and groaned bitterly, "wave on; and take heed that thou be not weary."

Cornelius Agrippa gazed on his strange guest with something of anger, but he excused his want of courtesy, on the ground of the probable extent of his calamities. He then waved his magic wand many times, but, to his consternation, it seemed to have lost its virtue. Turning again to the Stranger, he exclaimed, "Who, and what art thou, man? Thy presence troubles me. According to all the rules of my art, this wand has already described twice two hundred years: still has the surface of the Mirror experienced no alteration. Say, dost thou mock me, and did no such person ever exist as thou hast described to me?"

"Wave on, wave on!" was the stern and only reply which this interrogatory extracted from the Stranger.

The curiosity of Agrippa, although he was himself a dealer in wonders, began now to be excited, and a mysterious feeling of awe forbade him to desist from waving his wand, much as he doubted the sincerity of his visiter. As his arm grew slack, he heard the deep solemn tones of the Stranger, exclaiming, "Wave on, wave on!" and at length, after his wand, according to the calculations of his art, had described a period of nearly fifteen hundred years, the cloud cleared away from the surface of the Mirror, and the Stranger, with an exclamation of delight, arose, and gazed rapturously upon the scene which was there represented.

An exquisitely rich and romantic prospect was before him: in the distance arose lofty mountains crowned with cedars; a rapid stream rolled in the centre, and in the fore-ground were seen camels grazing; a rill trickling by, in which some sheep were quenching their thirst; and a lofty palm-tree, beneath whose shade a young female of exquisite beauty, and richly habited in the costume of the East, was sheltering herself from the rays of the noontide sun.

"'Tis she! 'tis she!" shouted the Stranger, and he was rushing towards the Mirror, but was prevented by Cornelius, who said,—

"Forbear, rash man, to quit this spot! with

each step that thou advancest towards the Mirror, the image will become fainter, and should'st thou approach too near, it will entirely vanish."

Thus warned, he resumed his station, but his agitation was so excessive, that he was obliged to lean on the arm of the Philosopher for support; whilst, from time to time, he uttered incoherent expressions of wonder, delight, and lamentation. " 'Tis she! 'tis she! even as she looked while living! How beautiful she is! Miriam, my child! can'st thou not not speak to me? By Heaven, she moves! she smiles! Oh! speak to me a single word! or only breathe, or sigh! Alas! all's silent: dull and desolate as this cold heart! Again that smile! that smile, the remembrance of which a thousand winters have not been able to freeze up in my heart! Old man, it is in vain to hold me! I must, will clasp her!"

As he uttered these last words, he rushed frantically towards the Mirror; the scene represented within it faded away; the cloud gathered again over its surface, and the Stranger sunk senseless to the earth!

When he recovered his consciousness, he found himself in the arms of Agrippa, who was chafing his temples and gazing on him with looks of fear and wonder. He immediately rose on his feet,

with restored strength, and, pressing the hand of his host, he said, "Thanks, thanks, for thy courtesy and thy kindness; and for the sweet but painful sight which thou hast presented to my eyes."

As he spake these words, he put a purse into the hand of Cornelius, but the latter returned it, saying, "Nay, nay, keep thy gold, friend. I know not, indeed, that a Christian man dare take it; but, be that as it may, I shall esteem myself sufficiently repaid, if thou wilt tell me who thou art."

"Behold!" said the Stranger, pointing to a large historical picture which hung on the left hand of the room.

"I see," said the Philosopher, "an exquisite work of art, the production of one of our best and earliest Artists, representing our Saviour carrying his Cross."

"But look again!" said the Stranger, fixing his keen dark eyes intently on him, and pointing to a figure on the left hand of the picture.

Cornelius gazed, and saw with wonder what he had not observed before, the extraordinary resemblance which this figure bore to the Stranger, of whom, indeed it might be said to be a portrait. "That," said Cornelius, with an emotion of horror, "is intended to represent the unhappy infidel who

smote the divine Sufferer for not walking faster ; and was, therefore, condemned to walk the earth himself, until the period of that sufferer's second coming. 'Tis I ! 'tis I !" exclaimed the Stranger ; and rushing out of the house, rapidly disappeared.

Then did Cornelius Agrippa know that he had been conversing with the Wandering Jew !

“ FORGET ME NOT,” 1828.

THE HOURI.

A PERSIAN TALE.

IN the 414th year of the Hegira, Shah Abbas Selim reigned in the kingdom of Iraum. He was a young and an accomplished Prince, who had distinguished himself alike by his valour in the field, and by his wisdom in the cabinet. Justice was fairly and equally administered throughout his dominions; the nation grew wealthy and prosperous under his sway; and the neighbouring potentates, all of whom either feared his power, or admired his character, were ambitious of being numbered among the friends and allies of Abbas Selim. Amidst all these advantages, a tendency to pensiveness and melancholy, which had very early marked his disposition, began to assume an absolute dominion over him. He avoided the pleasures of the chase, the banquet, and the Harem; and would shut himself up for days and weeks in

his Library, the most valuable and extensive collection of Oriental literature then extant, where he passed his time principally in the study of the Occult Sciences, and in the perusal of the works of the Magicians and the Astrologers. One of the most remarkable features of his character was the indifference with which he regarded the beautiful females, Circassians, Georgians, and Franks, who thronged his Court, and who tasked their talents and charms to the utmost to find favour in the eyes of the Shah. Exclamations of fondness for some unknown object would, nevertheless, often burst from his lips in the midst of his profoundest reveries; and, during his slumbers, he was frequently heard to murmur expressions of the most passionate love. Such of his subjects whose offices placed them near his person, were deeply afflicted at the symptoms which they observed, and feared that they indicated an aberration of reason; but when called upon to give any directions, or take any step for the management of the affairs of the nation, he still exhibited his wonted sagacity and wisdom, and excited the praise and wonder of all.

He had been lately observed to hold long and frequent consultations with the Magicians. The kingdom had been scoured from east to west in search of the most skilful and learned men of this

class : but whatever might be the questions which Abbas Selim propounded, it seemed that none of them could give satisfactory answers. His melancholy deepened, and his fine manly form was daily wasting under the influence of some unknown malady. The only occupations which seemed at all to soothe him, were singing and playing on his Dulcimer. The tunes were described, by those who sometimes contrived to catch a few notes of them, to be singularly wild and original, and such as they had never heard before ; and a Courtier, more daring than the rest, once ventured so near the royal privacy as to be able to distinguish the words of a Song, which were to the following effect : —

“ Sweet Spirit ! ne’er did I behold
Thy ivory neck, thy locks of gold ;
Or gaze into thy full dark eye ;
Or on thy snowy bosom lie ;
Or take in mine thy small white hand ;
Or bask beneath thy smilings bland ;
Or walk, enraptured, by the side
Of thee, my own immortal Bride !

I see thee not ; yet oft’ I hear
Thy soft voice whispering in mine ear ;
And, when the evening breeze I seek,
I feel thy kiss upon my cheek ;

And when the moon-beams softly fall
On hill, and tower, and flower-crown'd wall,
Methinks the patriarch's dream I see,
The steps that lead to Heaven and Thee!

I've heard thee wake, with touch refined,
The viewless harp-strings of the wind;
When on my ears their soft tones fell,
Sweet as the voice of Israfil.*
I've seen thee, midst the lightning's sheen,
Lift up for me Heaven's cloudy screen,
And give one glimpse, one transient glare,
Of the full blaze of glory there.

Of't 'midst my wanderings wild and wide,
I know that thou art by my side;
For flowers breathe sweeter 'neath thy tread,
And suns burn brighter o'er thy head;
And though thy steps so noiseless steal;
Though thou did'st ne'er thy form reveal,
My throbbing heart, and pulses high,
Tell me, sweet Spirit! thou art nigh.

Oh! for the hour, the happy hour,
When Azrael's† wings shall to thy bower
Bear my enfranchised Soul away,
Unfetter'd with these chains of clay!
For what is he, whom men so fear,
Azrael, the solemn and severe!

* The Angel of Music.

† The Angel of Death.

What, but the white-robed Priest is he,
Who weds my happy Soul to thee ?

Then shall we rest in bowers that bloom
With more than Araby's perfume ;
And gaze on scenes so fair and bright,
Thought never soar'd so proud a height ;
And list to many a sweeter note
Than swells th' enamour'd Bulbul's throat ;
And one melodious Ziraleet*
Through Heaven's eternal year repeat !”

One evening, when the Shah was thus occupied, his Prime Minister and favourite, Prince Ismael, introduced into his apartment a venerable man, whose white hair, long flowing beard, and wan and melancholy, but highly intellectual features, failed not to arrest the attention, and command the respect, of all who beheld him. His garments were plain and simple, even to coarseness ; but he was profusely decorated with jewels, apparently of considerable value ; and bore a long white wand in his hand.

“ I have at length, Oh King !” said the Minister, “ met with the famous Achmet Hassan, who professes, that if it be in the power of any

* A Song of rejoicing.

“ mortal to procure the gratification of your Highness’s wishes, that power resides in him.”

“ Let him enter,” said the Shah. The Minister made an obeisance, introduced the Sage, and retired.

“ Old man,” said Abbas Shah, “ thou knowest wherefore I have sought thee, and what I have desired of thee ?”

“ Prince,” said Achmet, “ thou would’st see the Houri, the Queen of thy Bower of Paradise ; her who, in preference to all the other dark-eyed daughters of Heaven, will greet thee there, and shall be thy chosen companion in those blissful regions.”

“ Thou sayest it !” said the Shah. “ Can thy boasted Art procure me a sight, be it even transitory as the lightning’s flash, of that heavenly being ?”

“ King of Iraun !” said the Sage, “ the heavenly Houris are of two different natures. They are, for the most part, of a peculiar creation formed to inhabit those bowers ; but a few are sinless and beautiful virgins ; natives of this lower world ; who, after death, are endowed with tenfold charms, which surpass even those of the native daughters of Paradise. If thy immortal Bride be of the former nature, she is beyond the reach of my Art ;

but if she be of the latter, and have not yet quitted our world, I can call her Spirit before thee, and thine eyes may be gratified by gazing upon her, although it will be only for a moment, transitory, as thou hast said, as the lightning's flash!"

"Try, then, thy potent Art," said the Prince. "Thou hast wound up my Spirit to a pitch of intense desire. Let me gaze upon her, if it be but for an instant."

"Prince!" said the Sage, fixing his dark bright eye upon the Shah, "hope not to possess her upon Earth. Any attempt at discovering her abode, or making her thine own, will be disastrous to you both. Promise me that thou will not think of any such enterprise."

"I promise thee any thing,—every thing! But haste thee, good Achmet, haste thee; for my heart is full, even to overflowing."

The Sage with his wand then described a circle round the Prince, within which he placed several boxes of frankincense, and other precious spices; and afterwards kindled them. A light thin cloud of the most odorous fragrance began to diffuse itself over the apartment; Achmet bowed his head to the ground repeatedly during this ceremony, and waved his wand, uttering many sounds in a language with which the Shah was unacquainted.

At length, as the cloud began to grow more dense, the old man drew himself up to his utmost height, leaned his right hand on his wand, which he rested on the floor, and, in a low, solemn tone, uttered an Incantation, which seemed to be a metrical composition, but was in the same unknown language. It lasted several minutes; and while he was pronouncing it, the cloud, which was spread over the whole apartment, seemed gradually gathering together, and forming a condensed body. An unnatural, but brilliant light then pervaded the chamber, and the cloud was seen resolving itself into the resemblance of a human shape, until at length the Prince saw, or fancied that he saw, a beautiful female figure standing before him. His own surprise was not greater than that of the old man, who gazed upon the phantom he had raised, and trembled as he gazed. It appeared to be a young female, about fifteen years of age. She was tall, and her form exhibited the most wonderful symmetry. Her eyes were large, bright, and black; her complexion was as though it had borrowed the combined hues of the ruby and the pearl, being of an exquisite white and red. Her lips and her teeth each exhibited one of these colours in perfection; and her long, dark hair was crowned with flowers, and flowed in glossy ringlets down to her

waist. She was dressed in a long flowing robe of dazzling whiteness ; she neither moved nor spoke : only once the Prince thought that she smiled upon him, and then the figure instantly vanished ; the preternatural light left the apartment, and the mild-moon-beams again streamed through the open lattices.

Before the exclamation of joy which was formed in the Prince's bosom could reach his lips, it was changed into a yell of disappointment. " Old man ! " he said, " thou triflest with me ! thou hast presented this vision to my eyes only that thou might'st withdraw it immediately. Call back that lovely form, or, by Mahomet ! thou shalt exchange thy head for the privilege which thou hast chosen to exercise of tormenting Abbas Selim."

" Is it thus, Oh King ! " said Achmet, " that thou rewardest the efforts made by thy faithful subjects to fulfil thy wishes ? I have tasked my Art to it's utmost extent : to call back that vision, or to present it again to thine eyes, is beyond my skill."

" But she lives ! she breathes ! she is an inhabitant of this world ! " said the Prince.

" Even so," returned the other.

" Then I'll search all Iraun ; I'll despatch emissaries over all the world, that wherever she be, she may be brought hither to fill up the vacuum

in my heart, and to share the throne of Abbas Selim ! ”

“ The instant,” said Achmet, “ that your Highness’s eyes meet hers, her fate is sealed ; she will not long remain an inhabitant of Earth. It is written in the Book of Fate that she shall not be the bride of mortal man.”

“ Death, traitor ! ” said the Monarch ; am I not the Shah ? who shall gainsay my will ? what shall oppose it ? ”

“ The will of Heaven ! ” replied the Sage, calmly. “ The irrevocable decrees of Destiny.”

“ Away ! avaunt ! thou drivelling idiot ! ” said Selim, “ let me not see thee more ! ”

The Shah’s maladies, both mental and bodily, increased alarmingly after this event. The lovely phantom haunted him sleeping and waking. He lost all appetite and strength ; and appeared to be fast sinking into the grave. At length he bethought himself, that if he could, from memory, sketch the features which he had beheld, he might possibly thence derive some consolation. He possessed some talent for drawing ; his remembrance of the form and features was most vivid and distinct ; and, guiding his pencil with his heart rather than his hand, he succeeded in producing a most extraordinary likeness. He then summoned into his pre-

sence a skilful and accomplished limner, in whose hands he deposited the sketch, and, describing to him the colour of the hair, eyes, and complexion, of the original, desired him to paint a portrait.

The Artist gazed upon the sketch, and listened to the description with profound attention, and evident surprise. "Surely," said he, "I have seen her whose features are here delineated. Indeed they are features which are not easily mistaken, for she is beautiful as one of the damsels of Paradise."

"Sayest thou so?" said the Monarch, starting from his seat, while he tore from his turban some jewels of inestimable value, which he thrust into the Painter's hand. "Knowest thou where to find her?"

"She lives in the southern suburbs," answered the limner. "Her name is Selima, and her Father is a poor but learned man, who is constantly buried in his studies, and is unconscious of the value of the gem which is hidden under his humble roof."

"Haste thee, good Ali, haste thee! bring her hither! Let no difficulties or dangers impede thee, and there is not a favour in the power of the Monarch of Iraun to grant which thou shalt ask in vain."

Ali flew rather than ran to the abode of his fair friend, in whose welfare he had always taken a lively interest. He knocked at the door, which was opened by the lovely Selima herself.

“ Sweet Selima,” he said, “ I have strange news for thee.”

“ Speak it then,” she answered smilingly ; “ be it bad or good, the sooner I hear it the better.”

“ I have a message for thee from the Shah.”

“ The Shah !” she said, and her eyes sparkled with a mysterious expression of intelligence and wonder ; but she did not, extraordinary as was the information, appear to entertain the slightest doubt of it’s veracity. “ ’Tis wondrous strange !”

“ ’Tis true,” said the limner. “ He placed in my hands a sketch for a female portrait, in which I instantly recognised your features.”

“ It is but a few days ago,” said she, “ that I had an extraordinary dream. Methought I was in an apartment of surprising extent and magnificence. A cloud of fragrant odours filled the room ; the cloud became gradually condensed, and then assumed the form of a young man of most majestic form and handsome features. Although I had never seen the Shah, I soon knew, by his pale, proud brow, so sad and yet so beautiful ;

his bright, sparkling blue eye; his tall, stately form; and his regal gait; that this could be none other than Abbas Selim. He smiled sweetly upon me; he took my hand in his; but as his lips approached mine I woke, and saw only the cold moon-beams gilding my chamber."

"Sweet Selima! why have I never heard of this before?"

"I told it all to my Father," said she; "but he frowned upon me, and bade me think of it no more; and to tell my dream to no one. But thy strange message has made me violate his command. I have thought of nothing but Abbas Selim since. How happy ought the nation to be whom he governs; and, above all, how happy the maiden whom he loves!"

"Then art thou, my Selima, supremely happy," said the Painter; "for of thee is he enamoured to desperation. Thou must accompany me immediately to the Palace."

In the mean time the Shah paced his apartment in an agony of impatience. "Curse on this lingering limner!" he exclaimed; "has he combined with the Magian to drive me to distraction? May every vile peasant press to his heart the being whom he adores, and am I, the lord of this vast empire, to sigh in vain, and to be continually tor-

mented with faint and momentary glimpses of the heaven from which I am debarred?"

He had scarcely uttered these words, when the private entrance to his apartment, to which he had given the Painter a passport, opened, and his messenger entered, leading his fair companion by the hand. No sooner did the Monarch's eyes encounter those of Selima, than he instantly knew that he was in the real, substantial presence of her whose phantom he had beheld. His wonder and delight knew no bounds, nor will the power of language suffice to describe them. He pressed to his heart the object for which he had so long panted. Health and strength appeared to be suddenly restored to him; new life seemed rushing through his veins; and his buoyant step and elastic tread seemed to belong to a world less gross and material than that in which he dwelt. When the first paroxysm of his raptures was over, he summoned the chief Imaum into his presence, and gave him orders to follow him into the Mosque attached to the Palace, for the purpose of immediately celebrating his nuptials with Selima.

The Priest gazed intently on the Bride, and his features became strangely agitated. "The will of Abbas Selim," he said, "is the law of his faithful subjects; but if I have read the Koraun

aright, and if my studies have not been idly pursued, the finger of Death is on yon fair maiden, and her nuptials with the Shah will but accelerate the approach of Azrael."

"Dotard!" said the Prince; and he gazed upon Selima, whose features glowed with all the hues of beauty and health: "tell not to me thy idle dreams, but perform thine office, and be silent."

The chidden Priest obeyed the last injunction of his Sovereign, and, with head depressed and folded arms, followed him and his Bride to the Mosque; which was hastily prepared for the celebration of these unexpected nuptials. Heavily and falteringly he pronounced the rites, which were just on the point of being concluded, when a man rushed into the Mosque, and, with frantic and threatening gestures, placed himself between the Bride and Bridegroom. It was Achmet Hassan.

"Forbear, forbear!" he cried, "or Allah's curse light on you!"

"It is the traitorous Magian," said the Shah. "Villain! would'st thou beard thy Sovereign even at his nuptial hour?"

As he spoke, he unsheathed his scymitar, and rushed towards Achmet. "Save him; spare him!" shrieked the Bride; "it is my Father!"

and rushing between them, the Shah's weapon pierced her to the heart, and she sank lifeless to the earth.

All were struck mute and motionless with horror at this fatal event. When they had somewhat recovered from their stupor, every eye was fixed upon the Shah. Still, and cold, and silent as a statue, he occupied the same place as at the moment of this fearful catastrophe. His eyes glared fixedly and unmeaningly; and his lips and cheeks were of an ashly paleness. He returned no answer to the enquiries which were made of him, and the import of which it was evident that he did not comprehend. In fact, it was clear that reason had fled from the once highly endowed mind of Abbas Selim; and that the reign of one of the greatest and most highly-accomplished Princes who had ever filled the throne of Persia was terminated.

In a state of listlessness and inanity he continued for above a twelvemonth. A few apartments of the Palace were all that remained to him of his once mighty empire, and the sceptre passed into the hands of his Brother. His most faithful and constant attendant was the unhappy Achmet Hassan, whom he had rendered childless; and on whose bosom he breathed his latest sigh. As the

hour of death approached, his intellects seemed to return ; but his malady had so entirely exhausted his strength, that he could not utter a syllable. Once, from the motion of his lips, it was supposed that he was endeavouring to pronounce the name of Selima ; then a faint smile illumined his features, while he pointed to the casement, and the deep blue sky which was seen through it, and his enfranchised Spirit fled to the bowers of Paradise.

“ FORGET ME NOT.” 1829.

STANZAS.

I WANDER'D by her side in Life's sweet Spring ;
 When all the world seem'd beautiful and young ;
 When Hope was truth, and she a peerless thing,
 Round whom my heart's best, fondest wishes clung :
 Her cheek was fann'd, not smitten, by Time's wing ;
 Her heart Love had drawn sweets from, but ne'er
 stung ;
 And, as in Youth's, and Beauty's, light she moved,
 All bless'd her !—she was lovely and beloved !

I stood by her again, when her cheek bloom'd
 Brightlier than aye, but wore an ominous hue ;
 And her eye's light was dimm'd not, but assumed
 A fiercer, ghastlier, but intenser blue :
 And her wan cheek proclaim'd that she was doom'd,
 And her worn frame her Soul seem'd bursting
 through ;
 And friends and lovers were around her sighing,
 And Life's last sands were ebbing,—she was dying !

I stood by her once more ; and, bending down,
 Seal'd on her lips a pledge, which they return'd not ;
 And press'd her to my bosom, but her own
 With Life's warm fires, to mine responsive, burn'd
 not ;

And clasp'd her hand, but, as in days by gone,
 Her heart's thoughts from it's eloquent pulse I learn'd
 not;

Light from her eye, hue from her cheek, had fled,
 And her warm heart was frozen;—she was dead!

“ MONTHLY MAGAZINE.”

LINES

Written after visiting a Scene in Switzerland.

THOU glorious scene! my wondering eye
 Hath gazed on thee at last,
 And by the proud reality
 Found Fancy's dreams surpass'd.

'Twas like the vision which of old
 To the Saint seer was given,
 When the sky open'd, and behold!
 A Throne was set in Heaven.*

* After this I looked, and behold a door was opened in Heaven, and the first voice which I heard, was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, “come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter:” and immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a Throne was set in Heaven, and One sat on the Throne: and He that sat was to look upon like a jasper, and a sardine stone. And before the Throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal.

REVELATIONS, *Chap. iv. v. 1, 2, 3, and 6.*

For there the everlasting Alps
 To the deep azure soar'd ;
 And the Sun on their snowy scalps
 A flood of glory pour'd.

A present Deity, that Sun
 Above them seem'd to blaze ;
 Too strong and bright to gaze upon,
 Too glorious *not* to gaze.

Below, the bright lake far and wide
 Spread like a crystal sea,
 Whose deep, calm waters seem'd to glide,
 Eternity, to thee !

Long, long, thou glorious scene ! shalt thou
 Within my memory dwell ;
 More vivid and heart-gladd'ning now,
 Than when I mark'd thee well.

More vivid and heart-gladd'ning too,
 Than the wild dreams I nursed
 Of thee and thine, ere on my view,
 Thy world of wonders burst.

For Fancy's picture was a gleam,
 Weak, faint, and shadowy ;
 And brief, and passing as a dream,
 The gaze I bent on thee.

But now, thou art a thing enshrined
 Within my inmost heart ;
A part and portion of my mind,
 Which cannot thence depart.

Deep woes may overwhelm, long years may roll,
 Their course o'er me in vain ;
But fix'd for ever in my Soul
 Thine image shall remain.

“ MONTHLY MAGAZINE.”

THE CRUSADERS' SONG.

“ Remember the Holy Sepulchre.”

FORGET the land which gave ye birth ;
 Forget the womb that bore ye ;
Forget each much-loved spot of earth ;
 Forget each dream of glory ;
Forget the friends that by your side,
 Stood firm as rocks unbroken ;
Forget the late affianced Bride,
 And every dear love-token ;
Forget the hope that in each breast,
 Glow'd like a smould'ring ember ;
But still the Holy Sepulchre,
 Remember ! Oh remember !

Remember all the vows ye've sworn
 At holy Becket's Altar ;
 Remember all the ills ye've borne,
 And scorn'd to shrink or falter ;
 Remember every laurell'd field,
 Which saw the Crescent waving ;
 Remember when compell'd to yield,
 Uncounted numbers braving :
 Remember these, remember too
 The cause ye strive for, ever ;
 The Cross! the Holy Sepulchre!
 Forget,—forget them never!

By Him who in that Sepulchre
 Was laid in Death's cold keeping ;
 By Her who bore, who rear'd him, Her
 Who by that Cross sat weeping ;
 By those, whose blood so oft has cried
 Revenge for souls unshriven!
 By those, whose sacred precepts guide
 The path to yonder Heaven!
 From youth to age, from morn to eve,
 From Spring-tide to December;
 The Holy Sepulchre of Christ,
 Remember! Oh remember!

“ MONTHLY MAGAZINE.”

A SERENADE.

WAKE Lady! wake! the midnight Moon
Sails through the cloudless skies of June;
The Stars gaze sweetly on the stream,
Which in the brightness of their beam,
 One sheet of glory lies;
The glow-worm lends it's little light,
And all that's beautiful and bright
Is shining on our world to-night,
 Save thy bright eyes.

Wake Lady! wake! the nightingale
Tells to the Moon her love-lorn tale;
Now doth the brook that's hush'd by day,
As through the vale she winds her way,
 In murmurs sweet rejoice;
The leaves, by the soft night-wind stirr'd,
Are whispering many a gentle word,
And all Earth's sweetest sounds are heard,
 Save thy sweet voice.

Wake Lady! wake! thy lover waits,
Thy steed stands saddled at the gates;
Here is a garment rich and rare,
To wrap thee from the cold night-air;
 Th' appointed hour is flown.

Danger and doubt have vanish'd quite,
 Our way before lies clear and right,
 And all is ready for the flight,
 Save thou alone !

Wake Lady ! wake ! I have a wreath
 Thy broad fair brow should rise beneath ;
 I have a ring that must not shine
 On any finger, Love ! but thine ;
 I've kept my plighted vow ;
 Beneath thy casement here I stand,
 To lead thee by thine own white hand,
 Far from this dull and captive strand,
 But where art thou ?

Wake Lady ! wake ! She wakes ! she wakes !
 Through the green mead her course she takes ;
 And now her lover's arms enfold
 A prize more precious far than gold,
 Blushing like morning's ray ;
 Now mount thy palfrey, Maiden kind !
 Nor pause to cast one look behind,
 But swifter than the viewless wind,
 Away ! away !

“ MONTHLY MAGAZINE.”

SIMILITUDES.

WHAT can Love be liken'd to ?
To the glittering, fleeting dew ;
To Heaven's bright, but fading bow ;
To the white, but melting snow ;
To fleeting sounds, and viewless air ;
To all that's sweet, and false, and fair.

Whereto can we liken Hope ?
To the arch of Heaven's wide cope,
Where birds sing sweetly, but are flying ;
Where days shine brightly, but are dying ;
So near, that we behold it ever ;
So far that we shall reach it never.

What can Beauty's semblance boast ?
The rose resembles her the most,
For that's the sweetest among flowers,
The brightest gem in Flora's bowers ;
And all it's sweetness soon is past,
And all it's brightness fades at last.

And what are Dreams, that light night's gloom ?
Doves that, like Noah's, go and come,
To teach the Soul this orb of clay
Shall not it's prison be for aye ;
That Time's dark waves shall soon subside,
And brighter worlds spread far and wide.

And what's like Popular Renown,
When the destroyer it doth crown?
The honey which the wild bee's power
Wrings from the bosom of the flower;
The harmless drones no honey bring,
They win the sweets who wear the sting.

And what is like Ambition's flight?
The eagle on his airy height;
On whose broad wings the sunbeam plays,
Though from the world they hide his rays,
Drinking the dew before it falls,
For which the parch'd Earth vainly calls.

“ MONTHLY MAGAZINE.”

THE RETURN OF THE GOLDEN AGE.

Imitated from the French of the PRESIDENT HENAUT.

WHEREFORE regret those happy days,
When Love was Lord the wide world o'er?
Our hearts from Time's dull tomb can raise
Those days, and all their bliss restore:
Let us love, let us love, and again behold
The happy times of the Age of Gold.

The flowers still flourish in our fields,
As beautiful as then they were :
The rose the same sweet odour yields ;
The birds the same bright plumage bear :
Let us love, let us love, and again behold
The happy times of the Age of Gold.

Still in the Spring the nightingale
Sings in the flower-enamell'd meads ;
And still the brooks, Love's same sweet tale,
Whisper amidst the answering reeds.
Let us love, let us love, and again behold
The happy times of the Age of Gold.

Still Zephyr breathes, and still doth he
For Flora feel unchanging love ;
And still doth the enamour'd bee
Amongst the fair young lilies rove :
Let us love, let us love, and again behold
The happy times of the Age of Gold.

“ MONTHLY MAGAZINE.”

QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

OH! what is Pleasure, in whose chase,
Life's one brief day is made a race,
Of levity and lightness ?

A Star, to gaze on whose bright crown,
 We wait until the Sun goes down,
 And find, when it has o'er us shone,
 No warmth in all it's brightness.

And what is Friendship? but that flower,
 Which spreads it's leaves at daylight's hour,
 And closes them at eve;
 Opening it's petals to the light,
 Sweet breathing, while the Sun shines bright,
 But closed to those who 'midst the night
 Of doubt and darkness grieve?

And what is Fame? The smile that slays,
 The cup in which sweet poison plays,
 At best, the flowery wreath
 That's twined around the victim's head,
 When, 'midst sweet flowers around it spread,
 And harps' and timbrels' sound, 'tis led
 Melodiously to death.

And what are Hopes? Gay butterflies,
 That on the breath of Fancy rise,
 Where'er the sun-beam lures them;
 For ever, ever on the wing,
 Mocking our faint steps following,
 And if at last caught, perishing
 In the grasp that secures them.

And our Affections, what are they?
Oh! blossoms smiling on the spray,
 All beauty, and all sweetness,
But which the canker may lay bare,
Or rude hands from the branches tear,
Or blighting winds leave withering there,
 Sad types of mortal fleetness.

And what is Life itself? A sail,
With sometimes an auspicious gale,
 With some bright beams surrounded;
But oftener amidst tempests cast,
The lowering sky, the howling blast,
And 'whelm'd beneath the wave at last,
 Where never plummet sounded.

“ MONTHLY MAGAZINE.”

TIME'S CHANGES.

THERE was a Child, a helpless Child,
Full of vain fears and fancies wild,
That often wept, and sometimes smiled,
 Upon it's Mother's breast;
Feebly it's meanings stammer'd out,
And totter'd tremblingly about,
And knew no wider world without
 It's little home of rest.

There was a Boy, a light-heart Boy,
 One whom no troubles could annoy,
 Save some lost sport, or shatter'd toy,
 Forgotten in an hour ;
 No dark remembrance troubled him,
 No future fear his path could dim,
 But joy before his eyes would swim,
 And hope rise like a tower.

There was a Youth, an ardent Youth,
 Full of high promise, courage, truth,
 He felt no scathe, he knew no ruth,
 Save Love's sweet wounds alone ;
 He thought but of two soft blue eyes,
 He sought no gain but Beauty's prize,
 And sweeter held Love's saddest sighs,
 Than Music's softest tone.

There was a Man, a wary Man,
 Whose bosom nursed full many a plan
 For making life's contracted span
 A path of gain and gold ;
 And how to sow, and how to reap,
 And how to swell his shining heap,
 And how the wealth acquired, to keep
 Secure within it's fold.

There was an old, old, grey-hair'd one,
On whom had fourscore winters done
Their work appointed, and had spun
 His thread of life so fine,
That scarce it's thin line could be seen,
And with the slightest touch, I ween,
'Twould be as it had never been,
 And leave behind no sign.

And who were they, those five, whom Fate
Seem'd as strange contrasts to create,
That each might in his different state
 The others' pathways shun?
I tell thee that, that Infant vain,
That Boy, that Youth, that Man of gain,
That Grey-beard, who did roads attain
 So various,—They were One!

“ MONTHLY MAGAZINE.”

SUCH THINGS WERE.

I cannot but remember such things were,
And were most precious to me!

SHAKSPEARE.

SUCH things were! such things were!
False but precious, brief but fair;

The eagle with the bat may wed ;
 The hare may like the tortoise tread ;
 The finny tribe may cleave the air ;
 Ere I forget that such things were.

Can I forget my native glen,
 Far from the sordid haunts of men ?
 The willow-tree before the door ;
 The flower-crown'd porch, the humble floor ;
 Pomp came not nigh, but peace dwelt there ;
 Can I forget that such things were ?

Can I forget that fair wan face,
 Smiling with such a mournful grace ?
 That hand, whose thrilling touch met mine ;
 Those eyes that did too brightly shine ;
 And that low grave, so sad, yet fair ;
 Can I forget that such things were ?

I would not change these tears, these sighs,
 For all Earth's proudest luxuries ;
 I would not with my sorrows part,
 For a more light, but colder heart ;
 Nor barter for pomp's costliest fare,
 The memory that such things were.

“ MONTHLY MAGAZINE.”

THE HEART.

In Imitation of Francis Quarles.

I STOOD in the sweet Spring-time by the side
Of a fair river, rolling wild and free ;
Winter's cold chain had melted from it's tide,
And on it revell'd in it's joyous pride,
As though no ice-touch e'er could bid it bide ;
How like, my fond, vain Heart ! how like to thee !

I roam'd it's banks once more, 'midst Summer's blaze,
Onward it rush'd to th' unfathom'd sea ;
Nor stay'd to listen to the sweet bird's lays,
Nor, calm and clear, imaged the Sun's bright rays,
But rush'd along it's channel's devious ways ;
How like, my headstrong Heart ! how like to thee !

I stood by that fair stream's green banks again,
When Autumn winds were moaning sullenly ;
The dead, sere leaves did it's bright waters stain,
And heavy pouring floods of falling rain,
Swell'd it's full breast, and drench'd the neighbouring
plain ;
How like, my sad, swell'n Heart ! how like to thee !

I stood again when Winter reign'd severe,
By that stream's banks which cheerless seem'd to me ;

It's once swift waves were frozen cold, and clear,
 And seem'd as they an enemy's strength could bear,
 Yet fail'd beneath the foot that ventured there ;
 How like, my cold, false Heart ! how like to thee !

And shall the Seasons only when they shew
 Their darkest hues, my Heart ! thy mirror be ?
 Oh ! learn Spring's mildness, Summer's strength, and
 grow
 Mature as Autumn, pure as Winter's snow,
 So shall they, when their features brightest glow,
 Be most like thee, my Heart ! be most like thee !

“ MONTHLY MAGAZINE.”

MADONNA.

Written on seeing a Painting by CARLO DOLCI, in a
 Private Collection at Antwerp.

MADONNA ! sweet Madonna ! I could gaze
 For ever on that heavenly face of thine ;
 Albeit I do not worship as I praise,
 Or bend my knee devoutly at thy shrine :
 For surely there was something of divine,
 Within the wondrous pencil that portray'd
 The tender softness of those deep blue eyne,
 That brow's wan beauty, those bright ringlets' braid,
 And the sweet Mother's smile upon those soft lips laid.

Sure they who worship thee will be forgiven,
Nor bear the penalty of that fond crime ;
For in that face is less of Earth than Heaven :
Beauty was ever worshipp'd, from the time
That fabled Venus from the Ocean's slime
Arose ; then well may adoration move

Man's breast, for one of beauty more sublime,—
Rome's Goddess, Queen of smiles, far, far above,—
Whose offspring was indeed a God, a God of Love !

Madonna ! thine own rosy hour is near,
The hour of calm, of softness, and of prayer :
And 'tis not well that I be lingering here,
Lest my too yielding heart that error share,
Which to thy shrine doth countless votaries bear ;
And Music too is weaving her soft spell,
And heavenly fragrance floats upon the air,
And feelings sad, but sweet, my bosom swell,
And tears are in my eyes, Madonna ! Fare thee well !

“ PARTHENON.”

SONG.

Come, pledge the cup to me, Sweetheart !
Oh ! pledge the cup to me !
And I will shew thee, ere we part,
How Wine resembles thee.

And first, it's semblance to begin,
 I tell thee frank and free,
 There's nought on earth can make me sing,
 Save Wine, Sweetheart! and thee!
 Then pledge the cup to me, Sweetheart!
 Oh! pledge the cup to me!
 And I will shew thee ere we part,
 How Wine resembles thee.

This bottle's ruby as thy cheek,
 And sparkling as thine eye;
 And, like thy fond heart, should it break,
 Then all my comforts fly:
 And when it's blissful tide I sip,
 That tide of Love and Wit,
 Methinks it is thine own sweet lip,
 Which mine's so loath to quit.
 Then pledge the cup to me, Sweetheart!
 Oh! pledge the cup to me!
 And I will shew thee, ere we part,
 How Wine resembles thee.

A sadder semblance is behind!
 Ah! Sweetheart! thou wilt die!
 And so the bottle's tide, we find,
 Ebbs low, which flow'd so high.
 Then,—as I'll do when I lose thee,—
 My grief and care to smother,

I'll bless it's memory, and flee
For comfort to another !

Then pledge the cup to me, Sweetheart !

Oh ! pledge the cup to me !

And let's drink deeply, ere we part,
Since Wine resembles thee.

“ NEW EUROPEAN MAGAZINE.” 1823.

STANZAS.

SUNS will set, and moons will wane,
Yet they rise and wax again ;
Trees, that Winter's storms subdue,
Their leafy livery renew ;
Ebb and flow is Ocean's lot ;
But Man lies down and rises not :
Heaven and Earth shall pass away,
Ere shall wake his slumbering clay !

Vessels but to havens steer ;
Paths denote a resting near ;
Rivers flow into the main ;
Ice-falls rest upon the plain ;
The final end of all is known ;
Man to darkness goes alone :
Cloud, and doubt, and mystery,
Hide his future destiny.

Nile, whose waves their boundaries burst,
 Slakes the torrid desert's thirst;
 Dew, descending on the hills,
 Life in Nature's veins instils;
 Showers, that on the parch'd meads fall,
 Their faded loveliness recall;
 Man alone sheds tears of pain,
 Weeps, but ever weeps in vain!

“FORGOT ME NOT.” 1826.

THOUGHTS.

I SAW a Glow-worm on a grave,
 But it's cold light could not scare
 Baser worms, who came to crave
 A share in the banquet there.
 And I thought of Fame, can it lighten the gloom,
 Or warm the chilliness of the tomb?

I gazed on Saturn's beautiful ring,
 I gazed and I marvell'd much;
 Shining a lovely but separate thing,
 Round the orb that it did not touch.
 And I thought of Hope, that shines bright and high,
 Never close, but ever nigh.

I saw the dew-drops gemming the flowers,
Beautiful pearls by Aurora strung;
But they vanish'd away in a few short hours,
As o'er them the Sun his full radiance flung;
And I thought of Youth's generous feelings, how soon
They're parch'd and dried up in Manhood's noon.

I saw a tree by a fair river's side,
Put forth many a strong and vigorous shoot,
But it breathed nought but pestilence far and wide,
And it poison'd the stream, that bathed it's root.
And I thought of Ingratitude piercing the breast,
That has nursed it to strength, and has rock'd it to rest.

I saw the leaves gliding down the brook,
Swift the brook ran, and bright the sun burn'd;
The sere and the verdant, the same course they took,
And sped gaily and fast, but they never return'd.
And I thought how the years of a Man pass away,
Threescore and ten, and then, where are they?

“FORGET ME NOT.” 1827.

THE COMET.

O'ER the blue Heavens, majestic and alone,
He treads, as treads a Monarch towards his throne;
Darkness her leaden sceptre lifts in vain,
Crush'd and consumed beneath his fiery wain;

And Night's swarth cheeks, pain'd by his gazing eye,
Blush like Aurora's, as he passes by.
See how the countless hosts of Heaven turn pale!
The blood-red cheek of Mars begins to fail;
Bright Berenice's shining locks grow dim;
Orion changes as he looks on him;
And the stern Gorgon on his brightness rests
Her stony eyes, and lowers her snaky crests!
In breathless wonder hush'd, the starry choir
Listen, in silence, to his one bold lyre;
Save when it's lingering echoes they prolong,
And tell to distant worlds the wondrous song!
And what that song whose numbers fill the ears
With admiration of surrounding spheres?
“ Honour and adoration, power and praise,
To Him who tracks the Comet's pathless ways;
Who to the Stars has their bright courses given,
And to the Sun appoints his place in Heaven;
And rears for Man a mansion more sublime,
Not built with hands, not doom'd to stoop to Time;
Whose strong foundations, unimpair'd shall stay,
When Suns, and Stars, and Worlds, and all things pass
away!”

“ FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING.” 1826.

STANZAS.

SING me a Lay!—not of knightly feats,
Of honour's laurels, or pleasure's sweets;
Not of the brightness in Beauty's eye,
Not of the splendours of royalty;
But of sorrow, and suffering, and death, let it tell;
Of the owlet's shriek, and the passing bell;
Of joys that have been, and have ceased to be;
That is the lay, the lay for me!

'Twine me a Wreath,—but not of the vine,
Of primrose, or myrtle, or eglantine;
Let not the fragrant rose breathe there,
Or the slender lily her white bosom bare;
But 'twine it of poppies, so dark and red,
And cypress, the garland that honours the dead;
And ivy, and nightshade, and rosemary,
That is the wreath, the wreath for me!

Bring me a Robe,—not such as is worn
On the festal eve, or the bridal morn;
Yet such as the great and the mighty must wear;
Such as wraps the limbs of the brave and the fair;
Such as Sorrow puts on, and she ceases to weep;
Such as Pain wraps round him, and sinks to sleep:
The winding-sheet my garment shall be,
That is the robe, the robe for me!

Oh ! for a rest !—not on Beauty's breast,
Not on the pillow by young Hope press'd ;
Not 'neath the canopy Pomp has spread ;
Not in the tent where shrouds Valour his head ;
Where Grief gnaws not the heart, though the worm may
 feed there ;
Where the sod weighs it down, but not sorrow, or care ;
The grave ! the grave ! the home of the free ;
That is the rest, the rest for me !

“ FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING.” 1827.

WHAT IS LIFE?

TELL me what is Life, I pray ?
'Tis a changing April day,
Now dull as March, now blithe as May :
A little gloom, a little light,
Nought certain but th' approach of night :
At morn and evening, dew appears,
And Life begins and ends with tears.

Yet what is Life, I pray thee tell ?
'Tis a varied sounding bell,
Now a triumph, now a knell :

At first it rings of hope and pleasure,
Then, sorrow mingles in the measure,
And then a stern and solemn toll,
The Requiem of a parted Soul.

Yet once again say what is Life ?
'Tis a Tale with wonder rife,
Full of sorrow, full of strife :
A Tale that first enchants the ear,
Then fills the Soul with grief and fear ;
At last with woe bows down our heads,
And sends us weeping to our beds.

Still what is Life ? That insect vain,
Lured from the Heaven it might attain,
To wed the glow-worm on the plain :
Wealth, pleasure, power at distance seen,
Shine brilliant as the glow-worm's sheen,
Life weds these seeming glorious forms,
And finds them blind and grovelling worms.

Still what is Life, again declare ?
Oh ! 'tis an arch of promise fair,
Built like the rainbow's, in the air :
With many a charm that's quickly past,
Many a bright hue, but none that last ;
All vanishing, away, away,
Ere we can say, how fair are they !

Yet what is Life ? A taper's light,
That feebly glimmers through the night,
And soon is quench'd in darkness quite :
Each wind that spreads it's flame but hastes it,
Each touch that trims it's splendour, wastes it ;
And brighter as it's lustre plays,
Sooner it's fragile frame decays.

“ FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING.” 1827.

TIME.

I SAW a Child whose youthful cheek
Glow'd with health's golden bloom,
And light did from his young eyes break,
And his sweet face illumine :
The Song he sang was “ Dance ! prepare
To tread a measure light ! ”
And his hand held a mirror, where
The Sun was imaged bright :
On wings as swift as Love's he flew,
Blushing like morning's prime ;
And flowers across his path he threw,
And that Child's name was Time.

I saw a Man, whose ample brow
Was furrow'd deep with care ;
And now despair, and rapture now,
By turns were pictured there :

The Song *he* sang was “ Heap and hoard,
And scale Ambition’s height,”
And his hand grasp’d a keen-edged sword
Of majesty and might.
Around him throng’d a numerous train,
Wealth, Fame, and Power sublime :
While his breast swell’d with fancies vain,
And his name too was Time.

I saw an aged, shrivell’d form,
With hollow eyes and blind ;
He crouch’d beneath the pelting storm,
And shook with every wind.
His Song was “ Life’s fair tree is fell’d,
It yields before the blast ;”
And his lean hand an hour-glass held,
Whose sands were ebbing fast.
Across his path dark phantoms roved,
Of Age, and Want, and Crime,
His wings seem’d clipt, yet swift he moved,
And still his name was Time.

Oh ! how Time changes ! and Man too,
Doth with the Wizard change ;
Borrow his every form and hue,
And in his footsteps range :
And now his mirror, now his sword,
And now his hourglass seize :
Thou fool ! why is thy mind still stored
With trifles such as these ?

Spurn this world for a better home,
 Where *his* wings cannot soar ;
 Where chance and change shall never come,
 And Time shall be no more !
 “ FRIENDSHIP’S OFFERING.” 1828.

LOVE AND SORROW.

MOURN not, sweet maid, and do not try
 To rob me of my Sorrow ;
 It is the only friend whom I
 Have left, ’midst my captivity,
 To bid my heart good morrow.

I would not chase him from my heart,
 For he is Love’s own brother :
 And each has learn’d his fellow’s part
 So aptly, that ’tis no mean art
 To know one from the other.

Thus Love will fold his arms, and moan,
 And sigh, and weep like Sorrow ;
 And Sorrow has caught Love’s soft tone,
 And mix’d his arrows with his own,
 And learn’d his smile to borrow.

Only one mark of difference they
Preserve, which leaves them never ;
Young Love has wings, and flies away,
While Sorrow, once received, will stay,
The Soul's sad guest for ever.

“ FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING.” 1829.

THE NATAL STAR.

A Scene from a Manuscript Drama.

SAVONA *on a Couch.* RINALDO *attending him.*

Savona.

Dear Rinaldo !

To thee these seem strange fancies, but I tell thee,
There's not a pulse beats in the human frame,
That is not govern'd by the Stars above us ;
The blood that fills our veins, in all it's ebb
And flow is sway'd by them, as certainly
As are the restless tides of the salt sea
By the resplendent Moon ; and at thy birth,
Thy Mother's eye gazed not more steadfastly
On thee, than did the Star that rules thy fate,
Showering upon thy head an influence,
Malignant or benign.

Rinaldo.

Nay, nay, Savona,

These are but dreams : the reveries of greybeards,
And curious schoolmen.

Savona. Pr'ythee, my Rinaldo,
Unclose the casement, that my eyes may once,
If only once, again read in that volume,
Whose treasured wisdom is far, far beyond
All that the painful industry of man
Heaps on his loaded shelves.

[RINALDO *opens the casement.*

There, there they shine !

Oh ! ye bright partners of my midnight watches !
Ye glorious torches, by whose heavenly light
We read the volume of futurity !
Ye golden sanctuaries of knowledge, safe
And inaccessible, 'midst all the change,
The ebb and flow of mortal accident !
When the vast deluge spread it's mighty wings
Over the earth, ye track'd a path of light
On the abyss, o'er which the hallow'd ark
Floated in safety ; when proud Babel fell,
And accents strange to human ears were dropt
From human lips, ye spake one language still,
And told the same bright tale ; when Omar gave
The Alexandrian wonder to the flames,
Ye spread your ample volume o'er his head
In broad derision ; bidding him advance
His torches, and add fuel to his pile,
To shrivel up your shining leaves, and melt
The glittering clasps of gold that guarded them !

Rinaldo. Savona, check this ardour ; your weak frame
Will sink beneath it.

Savona. Nay, my friend, 'tis vain.
'Tis written yonder. When the hand of man
Can tear the shining planets from their spheres
Then may he work my cure.

Rinaldo. I behold nought
But a bright starry night ; betokening
Aught but disease and death.

Savona. See'st thou yon cluster
Of stars, that glitter right above that clump
Of stately pines ?

Rinaldo. I mark it steadfastly.

Savona. And mark'st thou in the midst one Star, that
seems

The centre of the group ?

Rinaldo. Yes ; 'tis a Star
Of a peculiar brightness, soft and mild
It's light, yet beautiful as Hesper's, when
The rest fade from him ; yet the neighbouring orbs,
Larger, and all of gloomier disks, appear
T' o'erwhelm it's beams ; while, station'd as it is,
In the most stormy point of Heaven, e'en now
On this bright night, light mists and vapours battle,
As 'twere around it's head ; and one black cloud
Comes sailing towards it from the north, and soon
Will blot it from my sight.

Savona.

There ! there, Rinaldo !

Hast thou not in those few unconscious words,
Summ'd up Savona's life ? Was I not born
With shining hopes, wealth, friends, and,—so
The world said,—talents ? Did not envious Fate
Cross my bright path ? malignant foes, false friends,
Untoward accident, and blighted love,
Rain misery on my head ? and am I not,
Now, in the noontide of my life, Rinaldo,
Stretch'd, with a broken heart, and faltering limbs,
Upon a bed of grief, while, rapidly,
Death, like a monster, lured from far, comes on
To grapple with his prey ?

Rinaldo.

Alas ! alas !

Sorrow, indeed, has mingled in your cup
Of Life, but sure your ills were not so strangely
Piled higher than the common lot of man,
To weigh you down thus soon.

Savona.

True, my Rinaldo ;

True, not so strange ; so very strange. Crush'd hopes,
Blighted affections, benefits forgot,
A broken heart and an untimely grave,
These form no wondrous tale : 'tis trite and common,
The lot of many, most of all, of those
Who learn to crowd into a few brief years
Ages of feeling ; as the o'er charg'd pulse
Throbs high, and throbs no more !

Rinaldo.

Dear friend, I hoped

Your heart had master'd it's unquiet inmates.
I've met you at the revel, and the dance,
And seen your brow wear that gay look, which charm'd
All hearts in former times.

Savona. Even so, Rinaldo;
But often, often is the visage masqued
In smiles and revelry, when the heart's wounds
Rankle the sorest; and, when we go forth
Into the cold and smiling world, and seem
The gayest of the gay, we do but bear
Our sorrows with us, as the stricken deer
Bounds on, through field and thicket, with the arrow
That wounds it, in it's side.

Rinaldo. Dear friend, cheer up!
Your malady is slight; friends, and new scenes,
And hopes revived, and trustier, truer joys,
Will soon work wonders. Think'st not so, Savona?

Savona. Look at the Star! look at the Star, Rinaldo!

Rinaldo. Oh Heaven! it does, indeed, wane, and
grow pale!

And that black cloud is near approaching it!
But this is idle, and but feeds the fancies
That prey upon your health. I'll close the casement.

Savona. Oh! no, no, no! for Heaven's sweet sake,
forbear!

That Star gazed on my birth, and on that Star
My dying eyes shall gaze.

Rinaldo. But not to-night,

I hope, Savona. Lend me thy hand. Ha !
 'Tis strangely hot and feverish ; but kind care,
 And skill will work it's cure. And yet I like not
 That black and ominous cloud. Now it comes nearer :
 It touches the Orb's disk. Thank Heaven ! his hand
 Is cooler now. It has o'erwhelm'd the Star
 In it's black mantle ! Why am I thus moved ?
 I have no faith in these things, yet I dare not
 Speak, or look at him. Ha ; the cloud has pass'd
 The bright bland orb emerges ! Dear Savona !
 Laugh at your idle fears : your Star has now
 'Scaped all it's ills.

[*Turns towards him.*

Oh God ! so has his Spirit !
 Cold, cold indeed his hand ! Oh ! but to feel
 Once more that feverish glow I started from.
 Savona ! dear Savona !—dead, dead, dead !

“ HOMMAGE AUX DAMES.” 1825.

L' AMORE DOMINATORE.

WHO is the Monarch so mighty and bright,
 Who comes triumphing on in his chariot of light ?
 The sceptre he bears is more rich to behold,
 Than Sámarcand's pearls, or Potósi's gold ;
 His coronal glitters with many a gem,
 As though Beauty's bright eyes form'd his diadem,

And his waving wings round his light form play,
Like the rainbow's hues on a Summer's day.

'Tis Love! young Love, th' immortal boy,
The child of Beauty, the parent of Joy;
Even Gods bow down to the Lord of hearts;
Jove's thunder is feebler than Cupid's darts;
And the sword of Mars, and the sceptre of Dis,
Have in turns been conquer'd and sway'd by his:
Then lift high each voice, and set wide each gate,
To welcome young Love to his throne of state.

That Throne is thy heart, Oh Mistress mine!
Dress it in smiles from thine own bright eyne;
The thousands that welcome young Love to his goal;
Are the wishes and passionate hopes of my Soul;
The wings that he flies on, Oh! *this* sweet kiss,
Dearest! is one, and the other is *this*;
And those soft lips are the rosy gate
That leads young Love to his throne of state.

“HOMMAGE AUX DAMES.” 1825.

GOODRICH CASTLE.

THOU sylvan Wye, since last my feet
Wander'd along thy margin sweet,

I've gazed on many a far-famed stream ;
Have seen the Loire's bright waters gleam ;
Seen Arveron from his wild source gush ;
The dull Scheldt creep, the swift Rhone rush ;
And Arve, the proud Alps' froward child,
Run murmuring through it's regions wild :—

But none to my delighted eye,
Seem'd lovelier than my own sweet Wye :
Through meads of living verdure driven,
'Twixt hills that seem Earth's links to Heaven ;
With sweetest odours breathing round,
With every woodland glory crown'd,
And skies of such Cerulean hue,
A veil of such transparent blue,
That God's own eye seems gazing through.

And thou, proud Goodrich ! changed and worn,
By Time, and war, and tempest torn ;
Still stand'st thou by that lovely stream,—
Though past thy glory like a dream,—
Stand'st like a monitor, to say,
How Nature lives 'midst Art's decay ;
Or, like a Spectre, haunting yet
The spot where all it's joys were set.

Time-hallow'd pile ! no more, no more,
Thou hear'st the hostile cannon roar ;

No more bold knights thy drawbridge pace,
To Battle, tournament, or chase ;
No more the valiant man thy towers ;
No more the lovely grace thy bowers ;
Nor bright eyes smile o'er the guitar ;
Nor the trump stirs bold hearts-to war.

The falling meteor o'er thee shoots,
The dull owl in thy chambers hoots ;
Now doth the creeping ivy twine,
Where once bloom'd rose and eglantine ;
And there, where once in rich array
Met lords, and knights, and ladies gay,
The bat is clinging to the walls,
And the fox nestles in thy halls.

“ LITERARY SOUVENIR.” 1827.

THE CAPTIVES' SONG.

Paraphrased from the 137th Psalm.

WE sat us down by Babel's streams,
And dreamt soul-sadd'ning Memory's dreams ;
And dark thoughts o'er our spirits crept
Of Sion, and we wept, we wept !
Our Harps upon the willows hung,
Silent, and tuneless, and unstrung ;

For they who wrought our pains and wrongs,
Ask'd us for Sion's pleasant Songs.

How shall we sing Jehovah's praise
To those who Båal's altars raise?
How warble Judah's free-born hymns,
With Babel's fetters on our limbs?
How chaunt thy lays, dear Father-land!
To strangers on a foreign strand?
Ah no! we'll bear grief's keenest sting,
But dare not Sion's Anthems sing.

Place us where Sharon's roses blow,
Place us where Siloe's waters flow;
Place us on Lebanon, that waves
It's Cedars o'er our Father's graves;
Place us upon that holy mount,
Where stands the Temple, gleams the fount;
Then love and joy shall loose our tongues
To warble Sion's pleasant Songs.

If I should e'er, Earth's brightest gem!
Forget thee, Oh Jerusalem!
May my right hand forget it's skill
To wake the slumbering Lyre at will:
If from my heart, e'en when most gay,
Thine image e'er should fade away,

May my tongue rest within my head,
Mute as the voices of the dead.

Remember, Oh ! remember, Lord !
In that day Edom's sons abhorr'd ;
When once again o'er Salem's towers,
The Sun of joy his radiance pours,
Forget not them, whose hateful cry
Rose loud and fiend-like to the sky :
“ Be that unhallow'd City crush'd !
Raze, raze it even to the dust ! ”

Daughter of Babylon ! the hour
Is coming, that shall bow thy power ;
The Persian sword shall make thee groan,
The Mede shall fill Belshazzar's throne ;
Blest shall he be who bids thee sip
The cup thou held'st to Salem's lip ;
And mocks thee, weeping o'er the stones
Red with thy children's mangled bones..

“ AMULET.” 1827.

STANZAS.

Like the young Spring-buds sweet and bright,
And like the lark, and like the light,

And like the wind, and like the wave,
E'en such is Hope :—buds find a grave,
The lark gives place unto the owl,
The light must yield to darkness foul,
The winds are fickle, waves betray,
And Hope is falser far than they.

And like the dew upon the thorn,
And like the blushful break of morn,
And like a vessel harbour'd well,
And like a song, and like a spell,
E'en such is man :—the dew exhales,
The Morning's past, the vessel sails,
The song is sweet, but swiftly flies,
The spell is broken,—Man he dies !

And like the azure skies of June,
And like the Sun, and like the Moon,
And like a bowl, and like a smile,
And like a taper's burning pile,
E'en such is Life :—the changed sky rains,
The Sun goes down, the pale Moon wanes,
The bowl is drain'd, *that* smile's the last,
The taper's spent, and Life is past !

“ AMULET.” 1828.

MOUNT CARMEL.

A Dramatic Sketch from Scripture History.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

THE HIGH PRIEST OF BÄAL.

ELIJAH, *the Prophet.*

REUBEN, *an Israelite.*

MIRIAM, *his Sister.*

Attendants on Elijah, Priests, Crowd, &c.

SCENE, *Mount Carmel.* TIME, *near Sunset.*

Reub. Nay, Sister, do not doubt,
Our God will manifest his power, and shame
Yon bold idolaters.

Mir. I hope, yet fear; .
For they are many, they are mighty, and——

Reub. See, see, the High Priest doth approach the
Prophet.

High P. Where is thy God? What eye hath ever
gazed
Upon his face? What ear hath heard his voice?
If there be such an one, he loves to dwell
In darkness and obscurity; he fears
To meet the gaze of those who worship him,
And, in his proud invisibility,
Laughs at their lowly orisons. Not such
Is he whom we adore. Behold him there!

[*Pointing to the Sun.*

Bäal! the great, the bright, the wonderful!

See how he traverses the boundless Heaven,
The azure palace of his sovereignty;
Answering our prayers with treasures of rich light,
Bidding the world on which we dwell, bring forth
Herbs, fruits, and flowers, to gladden and support
His worshippers. From morn to eve, his eye,
With an untiring love, is fixed on us;
And when our feeble senses seek repose,
Then doth he kindly veil his burning beams,
And bid his silver regent bathe our lids
In a pure flood of milder, gentler light;
While sweet dreams glad our spirits, or deep sleep
Rocks them to rest unbroken.

Mir.

Look, my Brother!

Reuben, it is indeed a glorious orb!
How like a God he walks the fields of Heaven;
Brother, I fear that he whom we adore
Is not so great as he.

Reub.

Peace, doubting girl;

The holy Prophet speaks.

Elijah.

Fond, impious man!

My God is every where! is seen and heard
In all created things! I see his power
And majesty in that resplendent orb,
The work of his own hand, which ye adore
In ignorance and sin; on which I gaze
With wonder and with humble thankfulness.
I see his wrath and terror in the blind,

Cold unbelief, which he permits to seal
Your senses and your hearts; and I shall soon
Behold his goodness, and his love to those,
Who keep their Faith unspotted and unchanged,
When, at my prayer, his fire from Heaven shall kindle
The offering which I place upon his shrine.
But wherefore linger ye? Did ye not say
That ye and I should each unto our Gods
Raise altars, and bring offerings; and whose God
Answer'd by fire from Heaven, should be acknowledged
The Lord above all Lords, and God indeed?
Have ye not call'd upon your God since noon,
And has he answer'd? Is not his bright orb
Fast sinking in the west, and will he not
Soon beam his last farewell? 'Tis now my turn
To try the power and goodness of the God
Whom I adore.

High P. Not yet, for Bäl is angry
At our imperfect rites, and he requires
To be again invoked.

Crowd. Bäl requires
To be again invoked.

[*Here the Priests of Bäl range themselves in a circle, and chaunt the following Incantation; dancing round the Altar at the end of each stanza, and cutting themselves with knives and lancets as they chaunt the last.*]

From thy bright throne, bow thine ear,
 Bäl! Bäl! hear us, hear!
 Thou who mak'st the rosy day,
 Thou who lend'st the lunar ray,
 Thou, at whom the stars grow pale,
 Thou, who gildest mount and vale,
 From thy bright throne, bow thine ear,
 Bäl! Bäl! hear us, hear!

Thou, to whom the highest Heaven
 For thy throne of power is given;
 Thou, who mak'st the mighty sea
 The mirror of thy brightness be;
 Thou, who bidd'st th' else barren Earth
 Give wealth, and food, and beauty birth;
 From thy bright throne, bow thine ear,
 Bäl! Bäl! hear us, hear!

Now thine Altar we array;
 Now the sacrifice we slay;
 Now his bleeding limbs recline,
 Offerings on thy hallow'd shrine;
 Now with lancet and with knife,
 We ope our own warm tides of life.
 From thy bright throne, bow thine ear,
 Bäl! Bäl! hear us, hear!

[*During this Invocation, the Sun gradually sinks
 below the horizon.*

High P.

Woe! woe! woe!

Leave us not, Bäl! leave us not unanswer'd;—
Unanswer'd and in darkness!

Crowd.

Woe! woe! woe!

Leave us not, Bäl!

Elijah.

Aye! howl on, howl on!

And call upon your God. Will he not answer?
Sleeps he, or is he weary, or departed
On some far journey, that he hears you not?
Are ye not here, four hundred priests of Bäl,
And yet your many voices cannot pierce
His dull, cold ear? How, therefore, can I hope,
Jehovah's one poor Prophet, that with these
My few attendants, I can make him bow
His ear to my complaints. Yet I'll essay it.

[*To his attendants.*

Now what I bid, perform: and answer ye
The questions I propound.

Let twelve stones the numbers tell
Of the Tribes of Israel;
Build with them an Altar straight
To our God, the good, the great;
Quickly answer every one;
Is it done?

Atten.

'Tis done! 'tis done!

Elijah. Dig a trench the Altar round;

On the Altar be there found
Piles of wood; the bullock slay;
And on the wood his carcase lay,

In bleeding fragments, one by one;
Is it done?

Atten. 'Tis done! 'tis done!

Elijah. Fill four barrels from the rill,
That streams down Carmel's holy hill;
Pour the water, once, twice, thrice,
On the wood and sacrifice,
Till the trenches over-run;
Is it done?

Atten. 'Tis done! 'tis done!

Elijah. Then now, most righteous God! what wait
we for?

In humbleness, and reverence have we set
Our offerings on thine Altar. Oh! send down
Thy fire from Heaven to kindle, and accept them;
So shall thine inward fire shine in the hearts
Of Israel gone astray, lost in the night
Of dark Idolatry, and they shall know
That Thou art Lord of Lords! the God of Heaven!

*[The whole scene becomes suddenly illuminated, and
a flame descending on the Altar, consumes the
Sacrifice, and dries up the water in the trenches.]*

Mir. Wonderful! wonderful! Jehovah! thou
Art God indeed! thou art the Lord of Lords!

Crowd. Sing, sing Jehovah's praise, for he is God!
He is the Lord of Lords, who reigns in Heaven!

Reub. See, see, Heaven opens! and the sacred fire
Consumes the offering! it is as though
God stretch'd his own right arm down to the earth
To accept the service of his worshippers.

Elijah. The trenches are dried up; the fire returns
Into it's native Heaven. That last red streak
Just glimmers faintly in the west, and now
'Tis gone, 'tis past! and hark! that fearful peal!

[*Thunder is heard.*

It is Jehovah speaks! answer him. Say
"Thou, thou, art Lord of Lords! the God of Heaven!"

Mir. Wonderful, wonderful! Jehovah thou
Art God indeed!

Crowd. Sing, sing Jehovah's praise, for he is God!
He is the Lord of Lords, who reigns in Heaven!

High P. Away! away! The Evil One prevails!
The foe of Bäl!

[*Elijah and the Crowd kneel before the Altar, and
the Priests of Bäl rush out tumultuously, as
the scene closes.*

"BIJOU." 1828.

A ROYAL REQUIEM.

SHED the fast-falling tear o'er the tomb of the brave,
 Mourn, mourn for the offspring of Kings!
 The sword of the valiant is sheath'd in the grave,
 The son of the mighty lies low as the slave,
 And the warm heart of honour is cold as the wave,
 And still as the ice-fetter'd springs.

Earth's splendours and pomps, like the bright skies of
 June,
 Too often are dimm'd by a cloud;
 Like the mild seeming halo, at Night's brilliant noon,
 That, diadem-like, gems the orb of the Moon,
 They oft' but betoken the storm that will soon
 That orb and it's brilliancy shroud.

Then pour the Lament o'er the tomb of the brave,
 Let us mourn for the offspring of Kings;
 For sheath'd is the sword that was bared for the right,
 Death-cold is the heart that beat warmly and light,
 And the Spirit has fled to a mansion more bright,
 And shaken Earth's stains from it's wings.

“ MORNING CHRONICLE.” 1827.

THE END.

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